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THE BOOM FOR SENATOR BORAH for President, scheduled to be launched by the Progressives in Congress, deserves every attention. It will certainly be a disgrace to the Republican Party if it permits Mr. Hoover to walk off with a renomination without any protest or contest. Indeed, it will justly be taken as a plain desire on the part of the Republicans to lay down the burdens of office-holding and commit suicide. There lies before us a letter from one of the shrewdest newspaper observers of long experience in the Middle West. He writes thus: "As to the political situation out here, I never saw anything like it. I actually do not believe that if Hoover ran tomorrow he would carry a State in the union. The Republican leaders in St. Louis, for example, are saying that anybody could carry St. Louis over him and out in the State anti-Hooverism is rampant." From every direction we get the same reports. Now Mr. Borah has his faults, the chief one being instability and a frequent inability to see things through. He has had his moments of silence when he should have spoken out, of cowardice when he should have been brave. Had he turned an uncompromising rebel eight years ago he would today be the greatest figure in our political life. But at the critical moment he has always surrendered to the party thrall. However he is in every way so superior to Mr. Hoover that we believe he could head off the latter's renomination, provided he stuck to his furrow with courage, spoke his mind with the persuasive oratory for which he is famous, told the truth, and "shamed the devil."

MR. GANDHI has arrived in London, wearing his loin cloth in defiance of British weather and the openly expressed disapproval of at least one forthright Briton who sent him a petticoat to cover his nakedness. Over the radio, when on September 13 he first spoke to unseen millions, the Mahatma reaffirmed calmly and clearly the tenets of the Indian non-violence movement.

> I personally would wait, if need be, for ages rather than seek to attain the freedom of my country through bloody means. I feel in the innermost recesses of my heart, after a political experience extending over an unbroken period of close upon thirty-five years, that the world is sick unto death of blood-spilling. The world is seeking a way out, and I flatter myself with the belief that perhaps it will be the privilege of the ancient land of India to show that way. . . .

If a kind fairy might be found to advise British statesmen, with some assurance that the advice would be followed, she would probably whisper that the time for England to yield was now, while it might be done with some grace. For the adherents of the non-violence movement in India have, at least as long as Gandhi lives to lead them, a weapon with which empires do not know how to cope. It is the immoveable body that grimly, quietly, everlastingly withstands the irresistible force. There is every reason to believe that Gandhi and his followers will remain firm. Further to resist them will make Great Britain look foolish at best and at worst like the cruelest of tyrants determined to enforce its will upon a people at whatever cost in money and blood.

A MOST ADMIRABLE SUGGESTION was made by the Italian Foreign Minister, Signor Grandi, to the Assembly of the League of Nations on September 8, for a holiday on new armaments until after the disarmament conference next February. We are delighted that it seemed to strike a sympathetic chord in official Washington—Senator Borah wisely urges a five-year suspension—although it has set our Navy League and our shipbuilders to tearing their hair. Obviously, the actual financial results in a financially collapsing world will not be great, but as a step in the right direction, as a move toward bringing the disarmament conference together in the right mood and spirit, we welcome it most heartily. If it did not obtain an endorsement, or even a comment, from M. Briand when he made one of his impassioned speeches to the Assembly of the League, harping upon the old French string that security must be achieved before there can be "possibility of a large reduction of armaments," it did call forth a remarkably emphatic statement from Viscount Cecil, in what the dispatches characterize as "one of the really great speeches of his lengthy career," that "no nation, least of all my own, will tolerate postponement of the disarmament conference."

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VISCOUNT CECIL then went on to assert, to "prolonged applause from the Assembly," that if there could be a "real rapprochement" in naval, military, and air construction between France and Germany "not only in words but also in actions, that would remove, I believe, 75 per cent of the political unrest in the world." There lies one of the great weaknesses of the French case. They demand security; they profess unending fear of Germany. Yet they will not take the simple steps which would really tie the two countries together in genuine friendliness. The present German Government has given proof after proof that it is ready for this rapprochement. It risked its prestige by asking that its chief be received at Paris; it would respond most eagerly to any half-way generous gesture from France if only because that would mean added power for it, and a corresponding weakening of the Hitler and Communist forces at home. The trouble is that France still puts its faith in arms and international guaranties. Just now it does not realize the truth that Lord Cecil voiced in saying that the Grandi proposal is one of those which must be adopted if the existing economic system is to be preserved. It is most gratifying that he put his country so squarely behind the Italian proposal. There is, therefore, as we go to press, every reason to hope that the resolution providing an immediate armament truce to be offered by Peter Munch of Denmark will speedily pass the Assembly.

FEW ADDRESSES by our captains of industry have been quite as smug and unctuous or full of contradictions as that which Silas H. Strawn, president of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, recently delivered over the radio. Mr. Strawn pointed out very cheerfully that all previous depressions had finally come to an end—which might also be said of the World War, the Black Death, and the Holy Roman Empire. He urged us all to meet the crisis by an awakening of "the latent spirit of our forefathers," but his only specific injunction under this head seemed to be that we should never, never, consent to adopt any governmental system of unemployment insurance. He talked much of the astonishing intelligence, wisdom, and courage of our business men; indeed, he even went so far as to say that "talk about the few rich owning the country or failing to do their duty as citizens is, generally speaking, bolshevistic propaganda." He is dead against the dole; it would "paralyze initiative and courage and destroy independence." Still, with astonishing inconsistency, he regards it as "the duty of every employer of labor and of every one else who can . . . to contribute liberally to the unemployed funds now being collected." Won't these voluntary funds "paralyze initiative"? Mr. Strawn concludes with the remark that the voluntary contributions for the unemployed that he now advocates "are not charitable gifts. They are premiums on insurance against socialism and the stability of our government." Then why not a compulsory unemployment insurance scheme, to make surer that the premiums will be paid, and that the insurance itself will actually exist?

THE MISCARRIED *Putsch* of the Austrian Heimwehr is further and welcome proof that these Fascists are extremely obtuse, and that that sorely tried country still has no intention of embracing a dictatorship. This is remarkable evidence of the innate stability and the incredible courage of the Austrians. No country is in a more distressing plight. The suffering is tremendous; the standard of living sinks steadily; the utter hopelessness of its present geographical and political situation is enough to take the heart out of the stoutest and most fortunate, to say nothing of the unemployed and the multitudes whose whole outlook on life is restricted to the effort to obtain a daily pittance in order to keep body and soul together. That under these really terrible conditions the populace has refused, either in the last election or now, in this abortive rebellion, to be stampeded into fascism is something that will bring cheer to the liberal elements throughout Central Europe. Meanwhile, it is a satisfaction to read that the Austrian Government is at last proceeding against Prince von Stahrhemberg who only a year ago was in the Cabinet. We trust that it will make an example of him—not by any severe sentence, but by making him utterly ridiculous.

FOR the first time in seventeen years, according to the report just issued by Governor Theodore Roosevelt, Porto Rico has succeeded in balancing its budget—and this in a world in which balanced budgets are considerable of a rarity. Steadily the island shows improvement in the management of its finances, in its export trade which has increased in volume, in agricultural conditions under a homestead commission which is endeavoring successfully to increase the number of small farmers working their own land, and in public health. The infant mortality rate has fallen from 161 to 126, the tuberculosis rate from 301 to 263, the death rate from 25.3 to 18.6. Governor Roosevelt is well aware that these figures are far higher than equivalent ratios in the United States, but he is noting progress merely and not final achievement. He points out, however, that there is still dire need of money and labor to make Porto Rico the country it must and should be. During the last year three of the most important crops were whole or partial failures; the fruit farmers were unable to dispose of their product at satisfactory prices; little of the tobacco raised has been sold; and the coffee-raisers are still suffering from the results of the hurricane of 1928 which destroyed the shade trees necessary for the cultivation of the coffee plants. Hospitalization, relief, education, public-health work for all classes are still imperative to a very large degree. Governor Roosevelt so far has shown himself an energetic and successful executive, and what has been accomplished has been largely by his efforts. It is to be presumed that he will carry on the work he has so hopefully begun.

MEXICO, in graciously accepting the invitation of the League Council to become a member in full standing of the League of Nations and in pledging her full loyalty and cooperation to that body, declares that she does not consider herself bound by Article XXI of the League Covenant. This is the article which reaffirms the validity of the Monroe Doctrine and declares that nothing in the Covenant shall be deemed to affect it. Our State Department, however, will not recognize Mexico's lack of recognition of one of our pet national monuments, so to speak. The United States, under the Monroe Doctrine, promises to resent any interference in the Americas by any European nation,

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whether the country "interfered" with objects to the interference or not. Mexico, therefore, may protest all it likes that it will not permit the United States to play the role of nursemaid. The nursemaid, with the proper attitude to the young, pays no attention to those protests, on the theory that grown-ups know best what is proper for their children. It is small wonder, under these circumstances, that our relations with our Latin-American neighbors become from time to time what might be described as strained.

POLAND AGAIN FURNISHES an acid test for the Assembly of the League of Nations. Rebuked both by Assembly and Council in no uncertain terms for its persecution of the minorities it rules, that country has by no means mended its ways. As a correspondent of the London *New Statesman and Nation* points out, Poland is not the only offender in this way, but "by reason of their barbarism and their abundance" the Polish violations of the minorities treaties make it the best state of which to make an example. "Not a month, not a week, hardly a day" has passed in the twelve years since the treaty with Poland was signed without violations of this document. As long as Poland continues to carry on thus, it remains one of the danger spots of Europe. It is bad enough that the Corridor should be there to acerbate German feelings, but how long can Germany or Russia be expected to endure the oppression of their minorities if the League refuses to compel Poland to act? The folly of the Poles in this matter is unbelievable. They cannot rely upon the loyalty of the White Russians, the Ukrainians, the Germans in their army if they tyrannize and brutalize those sections of the population; they are creating in the hearts of great masses of their people hatred and bitterness. And this is the Government that Woodrow Wilson felt could best of all be trusted with minorities since its people had endured such frightful wrongs when they were themselves divided up among Germany, Russia, and Austria!

THE RETURN OF WALTER LIPPMANN to the metropolitan press has rightly been greeted with generous acclaim by the journals of New York City. It is greatly to the credit of the *Herald Tribune*—not so long ago one of the most hide-bound and reactionary Republican dailies—that it has given him a public forum from which he may launch the ideas that are nearest to his heart, even though these ideas may be repugnant to the owners and editors of the paper which gives him the hospitality of its columns. That is broad-guage journalism at its best, for which those responsible deserve all credit. Mr. Lippmann's first article was a masterly laying of the foundations for the argument he is to build up. For him the change from the anonymity of the editorial page of the *World* must be extremely welcome; it is a challenge to his leadership, to his ability not only to write charmingly, but to present remedies for the dire situation of the whole world. There has been some criticism of his conduct of the *World's* editorial page in that its policies frequently led up to a radical solution from which, at the last moment, it shrank. We are eager to believe that Mr. Lippmann has genuine contributions to make to our political thinking and we rejoice that, in the *Herald Tribune,* his views will be read by many conservatives and standpatters who would otherwise never be exposed to liberal ideas.

EVERY MONDAY MORNING we read with renewed surprise and sometimes enjoyment the entire page which the New York *Times* prints of what are presumably the cream of the best sermons delivered in the metropolis on Sunday. The great bulk of what appears on that page can hardly be considered worth printing on the ground of its originality or profundity, and the great majority of the divines there represented hardly have that nation-wide or even city-wide reputation that might justify their utterances being considered "news" regardless of their possession of, or lack of, sense. Yet the reflection is forced upon one that if the extracts from sermons reprinted by the *Times* on Monday really do represent the cream of the best sermons delivered in the nations's greatest city, then the American churches have reached a state pretty close to intellectual bankruptcy. The sermon on September 13, for example, preached in the First Baptist Church by the Rev. Dr. Cortland Myers, imported all the way from Los Angeles, is quite typical. Under the headline "Return to God Held Key to Prosperity" the Reverend Doctor opines that "when the nations of the world get away from God, they always go down," and when this great economic principle has been grasped, "then maybe your stocks will go up." Dr. Myers's solution, like those of most of his colleagues, has the great virtue of simplicity; it dispenses with the need of troubling our heads over such questions as reparations, war debts, tariffs, overproduction, price relationships, and unemployment insurance. We should adopt the solution with enthusiasm were it not for the slight chance that the Reverend Doctor may be in error. Perhaps he would have done better to paraphrase an earlier comment by remarking, "Render unto Hoover the depressions that are Hoover's."

CARRYING A LIVE BULL on his back daily and proceeding 100 feet with his burden is the exercise deemed necessary to his health and well-being by Mr. H. E. Man of Tennessee. Some months ago when one of his cows presented Mr. Man with a bull calf, he was compelled for some reason to carry the little fellow from one part of the farm to another. Whether that fact gave him the idea or whether he had been dipping at odd hours into Greek mythology we do not know. At any rate, Mr. Man read the story of Milo of Crotona, a Greek athlete who carried a full grown heifer into the stadium on his back, killed it with one blow, and devoured it before the Emperor and a cheering audience. Mr. Man thereupon resolved to emulate at least part of this feat. His bull calf is now a yearling weighing 800 pounds; every day his owner leads him out to a platform which he docilely mounts; Mr. Man stoops down, drapes the bull around his shoulders, rises, and walks his required stint before he sets the animal down. We should like to warn him that it is not the final straw that breaks the back of ambitious camels, but an accumulation of them. Mr. Man will come, we fear, to a bad end. And the ultimate effect on his bull, conditioned to be carried every day by a master no longer able to perform that feat, will be something to write Dr. Freud about! Nevertheless, it is a noble endeavor, and one not likely to be heavily commercialized. Bull-carrying, indeed, seems far superior as a national sport to tree-sitting, non-stop dancing, chair-rocking, or pushing peanuts along the ground with the nose. And it is, of course, an indispensable preliminary to bull throwing.

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The British Mess

THAT is what it deserves to be called—a mess and a needless one. The more one studies the emergency budget which the Chancellor of the Exchequer presented to Parliament on September 11, the more the wonder grows. For, except for the simple item of the cut in the dole, it is a budget which the Labor Members could have cheered just as heartily as did their Liberal and Conservative opponents. More than that, the cables contain the definite statement from Arthur Henderson himself that a majority of the Labor Ministers had already agreed to a 10 per cent cut in the dole before the break-up occurred. Then why the break-up? Again—to add to the confusion—in opposing the budget William Graham declared that "if the Labor Cabinet had been told the whole case there might never have been a change of Government." This is taken by the excellent London correspondent of the New York *Evening Post,* Raymond Swing, to be confirmation of the report that the London bankers had pledged Ramsay MacDonald not to tell any one in the Labor Cabinet, except the Chancellor and J. H. Thomas, of the gravity of the situation. This condition he accepted, thus placing himself in the position of negotiating with the Opposition leaders, Baldwin and Samuels, while keeping the rest of his own Cabinet, his life-long associates in the Labor Party, in ignorance of what was happening.

If further proof is needed that the British are at their favorite game of "muddling through," let us add that British bonds—in the face of all the hullabaloo about England's endangered credit and grave peril—are still standing higher than French bonds; that that great democrat, Ramsay MacDonald, has demanded and will receive dictatorial powers to govern England by "orders in council" under a statute passed some years ago for a totally different purpose; and that Maynard Keynes heads those economists who flatly declare that the Snowden budget is by no means certain to produce the economies expected, since the economies themselves and the new taxation which increases the income tax from four to five shillings in the pound, will further depress business, lower its taxable profits, and increase unemployment. Finally, incredible as it seems, Arthur Henderson, the new leader of the Labor Party, has definitely abandoned free trade in favor of a 10 per cent revenue tariff "as an emergency expedient" rather than to cut the dole. Thus he has practically joined hands with Stanley Baldwin on the latter's chief issue, on which the Conservative leader is preparing to go before the country. So why should there not be a Labor and Conservative Coalition Cabinet, on the death of the present one, standing on the platform of "a tariff for free-trade Britain?"

Nor does the speech made by Ramsay MacDonald on September 8 in defense of his actions clarify matters. It is rambling, entirely unconvincing, and throws no light on the dark places. He dwells repeatedly on the dire situation that arose and the necessity of prompt action, at one place speaking of the "day or two which was left to avert calamity." Yet he states that the first grave warning of the bankers reached him on August 8, but that no action was finally taken until his Government resigned on August 23, and he was recommissioned to form the national Government—an interval of fifteen days for the crisis to develop and a solution to be worked out. Scoffing at a "bankers' plot," he declared that "never in the whole negotiations . . . did the banks interfere with a political proposal, but simply confined themselves to giving expert advice as to the effect of the proposals and the possible yield of the loan." This is doubtless true, but if the bankers said that the loan would be impossible without a cut in the dole they would none the less be interfering in political policy while merely giving a banker's opinion as to how a loan could be arranged.

Mr. MacDonald failed to reply to those of his critics who declared that there were other resources of the Government which could be resorted to before it was necessary to lay hands on the dole. That there were such resources is confirmed by a letter sent by F. W. Pethick-Lawrence, Parliamentary Secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself, to his constituents in explanation of his refusal to stand by Mr. Snowden and the Prime Minister. Speaking of the desirability of balancing the budget, Mr. Pethick-Lawrence says that there was a much more effective method of dealing with the crisis "and that is to mobilize in support of the sterling exchange the vast foreign capital (over one billion pounds) held by British subjects. This was done quite successfully during the war." He also declared that a bond-conversion scheme would have been possible as well as other steps, and he declares that in his opinion "the action taken by the Prime Minister has been fundamentally wrong."

> It was wrong in my opinion to accept the view that budgetary deficiency was the main cause of the trouble. It was wrong to place budgetary reform first instead of the mobilization of foreign securities. It was wrong to disrupt the Labor Party by insisting on greater sacrifice by the poorer workers than seemed to a large section of his colleagues a fair proportion. It was wrong to lower the dignity and credit of the country as a whole by shaping our internal policy to accord with the behests of foreign financiers.

With these views we are in entire accord. From the facts so far developed it is impossible to see why Mr. MacDonald could not have spared the dole and yet met the emergency in fullest measure. But in the last analysis what we are witnessing in England is another evidence of the complete breakdown of capitalism as an economic system. What happened has been defined for us by a distinguished British economist in these words:

> Bankers here, using foreign funds for their private gain, so imperil the monetary system of our nation that our Government has to rescue them by special arrangements with foreign bankers, who dictate the kind of economies our Government must make in order to secure their aid! The depression which disables us from balancing our budget and our foreign-trade account is a plain register of the inability of private business to employ the available capital and labor so as to earn a profit. This is a simple confession of the complete failure of capitalism to deliver the goods.

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France Triumphant

BY the proposed customs union between Germany and Austria, forbidden by the World Court in an eight to seven decision, the independence of those countries was to be preserved and the initial step taken toward a general European customs union, for all other countries were invited to join; and its experimental character was attested by its denounceability by either party within three years. France, Italy, and Czecho-Slovakia maintained that this proposal was incompatible with the terms of the Treaty of St. Germain and the Protocol of 1922, signed by Austria when she received the so-called League of Nations loan; Germany and Austria denied such incompatibility. The Council of the League asked the World Court for an advisory opinion.

By the treaty Germany agreed to respect Austrian independence and Austria agreed not to alienate it; by the protocol, Austria agreed to refrain "from any economic or financial engagement calculated . . . to compromise this independence"; and while retaining "her freedom" in "customs tariffs" and "in all matters relating to her economic regime," agreed not to "violate her economic independence by granting to any state . . . exclusive advantages calculated to threaten this independence."

There is enough loose language in these agreements plausibly to justify any conclusion, the result depending, however, not on legal but on political considerations. By no legal tests known could Austria's "independence" in any aspects be deemed alienated or compromised by the proposed customs treaty. That only political considerations could warrant holding such a tariff regime incompatible with the treaties mentioned soon became apparent from the form of argument advanced by France and Italy. They maintained that a customs union would inevitably lead to a political union; that "economic independence" meant "no customs union"; that "independence" should be interpreted not merely as legal but as political or actual independence. Italy added that the customs union would lead to war. The German and Austrian agents argued that "independence" was an indivisible legal concept and implied the possession of independent organs of government, not subject to foreign dictation; that independence had military, political, economic, and other manifestations; that if Austria was deemed legally independent notwithstanding its unilaterally imposed political and military fetters, certainly a voluntary bilateral and possibly multilateral customs union, from which she could freely withdraw, was no alienation of independence but an exercise of independence, which not Austria and Germany, but France, Italy, and Czecho-Slovakia were seeking to throttle, contrary to the latters' express treaty engagements. They argued that the Court had to take into consideration not future possibilities, which was pure political speculation, but the present proposed regime, to the general principle of which all of Europe had paid lip-service.

The opinion of the majority of the Court indicates that the political argument won a narrow victory. The majority claims that Austria is a sensitive point in the European system and her existence is an essential feature of the political settlements; that any act which could endanger that independence, so far as could reasonably be foreseen, was denied to her; and that the proposed customs regime was within the restrictions imposed upon Austria by the Protocol of 1922. It is interesting to observe that among the majority eight we find all but one of the "French bloc," notably Fromageot (France), Negulescu (Rumania), Rostworowski (Poland), Guerrero (Salvador), and Urrutia (Colombia), all of whom have either their homes or their roots in Paris. We are glad to observe that among the minority we find the most distinguished judges on the Court, and we honor Rolin-Jaequemyns (Belgium) for refusing to yield to political seduction.

What does this opinion mean for the Court and for Europe? It would indicate that the Council has used the Court to escape political embarrassment for itself. The Council, in submitting to the Court questions which can only be decided on political considerations, and the Court, in responding to such requests, are weakening the Court as a judicial body urgently in need of universal confidence. For Europe it means that French politics, corrupt and destructive, working through the Council and the Court, has pushed Europe another step further into the bog. Italy's reason for opposing the customs union was very special. Germany and Austria had the luck to advance a proposal, entirely constructive, which happened to arouse French susceptibilities; for France is apparently determined to prevent the economic recovery of Germany, fearing that it might eventually lead to political recovery.

Why Gold Comes Here

"SOME OFFICIALS" in Washington, according to the anonymously inspired dispatch of Richard V. Oulahan to the New York *Times,* are becoming restive under criticism of the Administration for the unparalleled concentration of gold in this country. It is not their fault, they say. There is no "hoarding" of gold in the United States. The gold is coming here because of the flight of capital from other countries, where confidence in governments, banking systems, and currencies has been shaken. The gold has come here because it is seeking a "refuge." That, apparently, is all there is to it. Indeed, Mr. Oulahan's dispatch goes so far as to say: "It is held in informed quarters here that those disposed to set up the accusation of hoarding should understand that neither the Government nor its citizens had anything to do with the flow of gold from abroad."

This is an amazing statement, but there is at least one element of truth in it. An important school of British economists, including such distinguished members as Sir Josiah Stamp and Maynard Keynes, has contended that our Federal Reserve Board has deliberately been pursuing a policy of "hoarding" and "sterilizing" gold. There does not appear to be any convincing evidence for this contention. On the contrary, the Federal Reserve Board and the individual reserve banks appear since the war to have been pursuing every possible policy that would tend to drive gold out, rather than draw it into the country. Contrary even to what is generally considered sound central banking policy, they have kept their discount rates below open market rates, and they have forced down open-market rates themselves

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by their policy of buying bills extensively in the open market. With money rates low in this market, the tendency would have been, other things equal, for international balances—which ultimately mean gold—to flow to the markets of other countries where they could command higher rates. Our artificially low rates, however, while apparently ineffective in keeping gold from flowing here, were highly effective in a way not at first intended, for they encouraged and stimulated the most extravagant orgy of stock speculation in our history;. and the timidity and even political pressure that kept those rates from being raised in time finally led to the subsequent disastrous collapse.

The unnamed Administration officials at Washington would be in the main correct, therefore, if they contended that our immense gold holdings had not come here as the result of American banking policy. When they go on to assert, however, that "neither the Government nor its citizens had anything to do with the flow of gold from abroad" they are talking nonsense. Two factors are principally responsible for bringing excessive gold here. The first is our preposterous tariff, which amounts virtually to a frank declaration on our part that we do not want to be paid for our exports with imports. This leaves gold as almost the only other means of payment. The other is our heavy private foreign investments, amounting to about $15,000,000,000, and the debt of nearly $12,000,000,000 owed to us by foreign governments, the interest and principal of which we demand shall be paid—but not with imports.

Finally, it might be pointed out that even the lack of confidence in foreign governments, is in large part the result of our own political policy. Not until we proclaim our readiness to cut the war debts are the German reparations likely in turn to be reduced to a figure that might make stability in world trade possible.

Sounding Brass

THERE is no one with whom we disagree more frequently or more enthusiastically than we do with the Right Reverend William T. Manning. Doubtless this glowering ecclesiastic would say the same for us if our opinions were forced upon his attention as often as his are forced upon ours, and to that extent we are even. But Bishops make the headlines very easily—especially when they happen to head wealthy congregations—and we are never long without a fresh reminder that the Cathedral on Morningside Heights will fight to the end every effort to introduce anything resembling sweetness or light into human society. Goodness knows that the church itself lags far enough behind secular opinion in most matters pertaining to social welfare. Goodness knows that it is usually to be found in the rear rather than in the vanguard of every significant movement. But Bishop Manning frequently succeeds in lagging behind even the church. And that is no inconsiderable feat.

Consider for example the matter of marriage and divorce. Long after both law and public opinion have consented to be reasonable upon that subject, the Episcopal Church has got around to considering the possibility of a very cautious modification of its intransigent attitude. It has begun to discuss the advisability of consenting (after a year's time and with the approval of the ecclesiastical authorities) to the remarriage of the so-called "guilty party" to a divorce—provided of course that the ecclesiastical court decides that the "guilt" is pardonable. But such elementary commonsense and such elementary justice is, as one might have expected, violently repugnant to the Bishop. He is not willing to pardon those whom his fellow bishops would pardon. They must suffer also, and as many people as possible must be made unhappy for the glory of God. To forgive would be, he declares in a blaze of sadistic fury, to surrender to the devil himself.

Most of those who, like him, oppose divorce under any and all circumstances support their position with arguments which purport to be drawn from a consideration of human welfare. To that extent at least they accede to the modern demand that the regulations of human society should appear to have as their purpose the promotion of man's happiness and well being. But the Bishop—and this is again highly characteristic—refuses to concede anything even in the nature of his arguments. He takes his stand upon the letter of the law and there he rests. The letter says "no" and he will thunder the letter.

Now if he were always so literal in his interpretation of his texts he might be consistent and even, in a fantastic sort of way, admirable. But when it suits his purpose he can forget, or interpret, or explain away quite as well as the next man. He can, for example, reconcile military "preparedness" with the injunction of his Master to turn the other cheek, and we have never heard that he insisted that his parishioners should sell *all* their goods to give to the poor. Moreover, we should, if we were of the stuff of which martyrs are made, endeavor to find out just how literally he takes the text about giving your cloak to the thief who steals your coat and we should snitch an alb out of the vestry just to see whether or not he would make us a present of his miter. But since we are not of the stuff of martyrs, since we are, indeed, only of those weak mortals for whom he makes so few allowances, we shall confine ourselves to speculation, and we shall wonder again just why this eminent Churchman is so insistent upon the letter of every law unless it happens to be one which enjoins love or gentleness or tolerance.

Can it be that Samuel Butler's jibe is pertinent here, and that even dignitaries as highly placed as the Bishop of the See of New York are willing, like lesser mortals, to "compound for sins by damning those they have no mind to"? Is it possible, in other words, that this particular dignitary is suffering from a bad conscience—that somewhere in the depths of his doubtless very interesting sub-consciousness he knows that he has been a bit too easy with wealthy sinners who are anxious to purchase forgiveness with a memorial window, or even that he has moments when he doubts whether the militarism which he actively champions is really so completely in accord with the teachings of Jesus as he has proclaimed it to be? We hesitate to entertain the suspicion, but if it were justified it would explain many things. "Surely," we imagine him whispering to himself in the depths of the night, "anyone as severe as I am with the 'guilty' party to a divorce need have no fear that he is ever loose in his dealings with those who are the least little bit guilty of greed, or cruelty, or violence."

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Speaking of Revolution . . .

By HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON

EMMANUEL-JOSEPH SIEYES was not exactly a hero. We can hardly blame him for that. The Vicar-General of the Diocese of Chartres was not expected to die on a barricade, but to spend his days showing miserable sinners and old ladies how to find the road to Heaven. Nevertheless, Emmanuel-Joseph played quite a role during the troublesome days of the great French "crisis" (shall we say?) of the latter half of the eighteenth century. He wrote an excellent little pamphlet which might be reprinted today if we changed Fourth Estate for Third. He got himself elected on numerous committees. He worked for this and he worked for that, but he was forever scared of his own shadow, and when the spook which the Good and the Wise had called forth to "frighten" refused to return to its slums and sewers, the former Vicar-General went through a period of great mental anguish.

He had voted for the death of the King and he had worshipped at the altar of the Goddess of Reason. That, apparently, had not been enough. Heaven alone knew what would be asked of him next. He did not even wait to inquire. He disappeared from view and remained in hiding until the Most Virtuous of All Men and the Greatest Dry of his time (hypochondriacs are apt to be both) went the way of all flesh (to use a term of almost Robespierrian simplicity) and the fire-works on the Seine proclaimed the end of the Reign of Terror.

It was then that Emmanuel-Joseph delivered himself of that famous and witty remark which will be associated with his name, long after his grandiloquent pamphlet on the rights of the Middle Class shall have been forgotten. Some one asked him, "And what, Monsieur l'Abbé, did you do all during the revolution?"

And he answered, "I lived."

No doubt that was quite an achievement. Thousands of people in their quick-lime graves wished they could have said as much.

The others were dead. Sieyès survived. And he even played some sort of role. Not much of a role, but the role of a living man, and that in itself was something of an accomplishment in the year 1793.

I am always sorry when I have to disagree with those in high authority. After all, they ought to know, and I am merely a humble onlooker. Day after day I read little inspiring bits of news. "The era of good-will is now upon us," and "Europe has turned the corner," and "This winter all will be quiet along the banks of the Seine, the Spree, and the Thames."

These inspiring little bits of news come from sources that ought to know, because they are in a position to know. But then I get private letters which corroborate exactly what I saw only a few months ago. They come from every corner of the Continent. Even in the most peaceful of neutral lands, the banks are turning themselves into miniature fortresses. Even in the least militaristic countries reserve officers are being asked where they stand.

But all that makes no difference to Versailles on the Potomac. The old propaganda mills of the Great War are being hauled forth from the attic. Soon they will be grinding once more. This time, however, it is not merely a question who will win a certain war. It is a matter of life and death for an entire form of civilization. And that civilization is not being killed by outside forces. It is in the act of committing suicide because its leaders are unwilling to face a few very definite facts.

Danger is a bully. Run away from it and it will hit you in the back. Meet it ready to fight and it cringes and whimpers and slinks away. There is a way of meeting the coming issue with the help of machine guns. Unfortunately, history (if it teaches anything at all) seems to prove that machine guns in the long run have accomplished less than nothing. Having an intense dislike for disorder of any sort, I would readily take to the machine-guns if I had any confidence in their ultimate efficiency. As it happens, I have none.

There is, however, another way out.

We are engaged in a race between Chaos and Education.

That sounds like a platitude. We have heard it before when we were urged to educate the illiterate of the Bowery. But just now they are busy with other things. For instance, with the problem of getting enough to eat.

I was thinking of a different sort of education. The education of the illiterate of Park and Fifth Avenues and the upper Sixties and Seventies. The fate of the next six months and six years (and six thousand years, for that matter) is in their hands. There still is time for them to forget a great many things and to learn a few new ones.

The only problem that worries me is this: What is the present address of the Bourbon family?

"I have lived" was a good enough answer, once the crisis was over.

"I intend to live," is a better one, before it has even begun.

Not only a better one, but a more courageous and intelligent one.

And just now those are two qualities that are worth ten billion tons of rhetoric and eloquence.

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The 1932 Disarmament Conference

By ALBERT EINSTEIN

Berlin, September 4

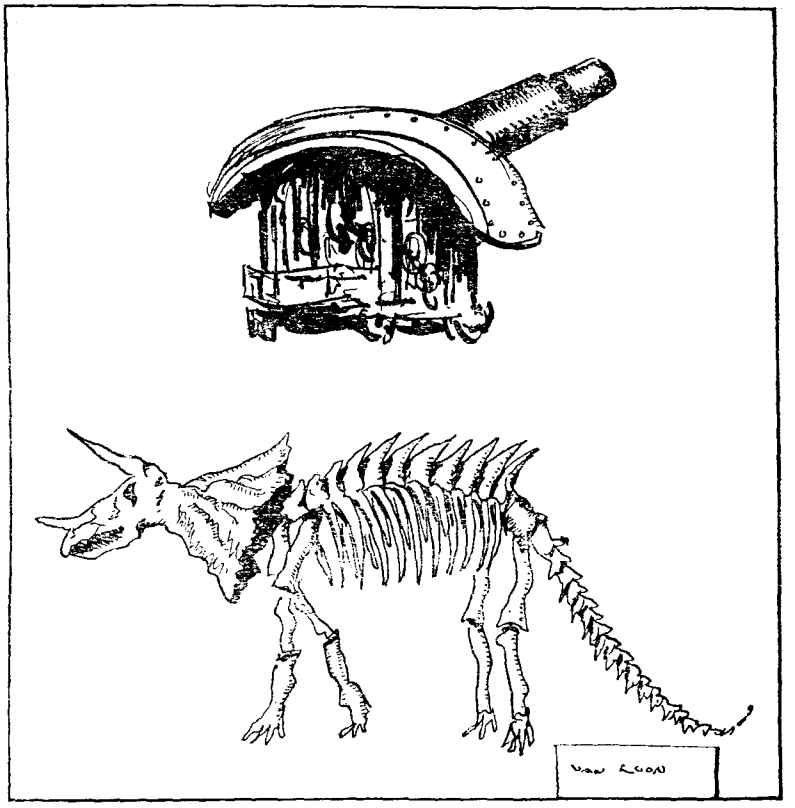
WHAT the inventive genius of mankind has bestowed upon us in the last hundred years could have made human life care free and happy if the development of the organizing power of man had been able to keep step with his technical advances. As it is, the hardly bought achievements of the machine age in the hands of our generation are as dangerous as a razor in the hands of a three-year-old child. The possession of wonderful means of production has not brought freedom—only care and hunger.

Worst of all is the technical development which produces the means for the destruction of human life, and the dearly created products of labor. We older people lived through that shudderingly in the World War. But even more terrible than this destruction seems to me the unworthy servitude into which the individual is swept by war. Is it not terrible to be forced by the community to deeds which every individual feels to be most despicable crimes? Only a few have had the moral greatness to resist; they are in my eyes the true heroes of the World War.

There is one ray of hope. It seems to me that today the responsible leaders of the several peoples have, in the main, the honest will to abolish war. The opposition to this unquestionably necessary advance lies in the unhappy traditions of the people which are passed on like an inherited disease from generation to generation because of our faulty educational machines. Of course the main supports of this tradition are military training and its glorification, and not less important, the press which is so dependent upon the military and the larger industries. Without disarmament there can be no lasting peace. On the contrary, the continuation of military armaments in their present extent will with certainty lead to new catastrophies.

Hence the Disarmament Conference in Geneva in February, 1932, will be decisive for the fate of the present generation and the one to come. If one thinks back to the pitiful results achieved by the international conferences thus far held, it must be clear that all thoughtful and responsible human beings must exercise all their powers again and again to inform public opinion of the vital importance of the conference of 1932. Only if the statesmen have, to urge them forward, the will to peace of a decisive majority in their respective countries, can they arrive at their important goal. For the creation of this public opinion in favor of disarmament every person living shares the responsibility, through every deed and every word.

The failure of the conference would be assured if the delegates were to arrive in Geneva with fixed instructions and aims, the achievement of which would at once become a matter of national prestige. This seems to be universally recognized, for the meetings of the statemen of any two states, of which we have seen a number of late, have been utilized for discussions of the problem of disarmament in order to clear the ground for the conference. This procedure seems to me a very happy one, for two persons, or two groups, ordinarily conduct themselves most sensibly, most honorably, and with the greatest freedom from passion if no third person listens in, whom the others believe they must consider or conciliate in their speeches. We can only hope for a favorable outcome in this most vital conference if the meeting is prepared for exhaustively in this way by advance discussions in order that surprises shall be made impossible, and if, through honest good will, an atmosphere of mutual confidence and trust can be effectively created in advance.



Two Back Numbers

Success in such great affairs is not a matter of cleverness, or even shrewdness, but instead a matter of honorable conduct and mutual confidence. You cannot substitute intellect for moral conduct in this matter—I should like to say, thank God that you cannot!

It is not the task of the individual who lives in this critical time merely to await results and to criticize. He must serve this great cause as well as he can. For the fate of all humanity will be that fate which it honestly earns and deserves.

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The Rebirth of British Labor

By DEVERE ALLEN

London, September 1

RAMSAY MACDONALD may have saved the pound sterling. He has certainly saved the life of the Labor Party. For the moves that eventuated so dramatically in the Emergency Government were not entirely unexpected, and were the outcome of differences within the party which were threatening to anaesthetize it for several years to come. So long as the Labor Government held office, it was the duty of the rank and file, they felt, to "play the game"; but the moment the crash came, there were sighs of relief among those who understood where "playing the game" was leading the labor movement.

"At last MacDonald has nationalized something," remarked a Socialist sardonically, the morning after the new Ministry was announced, "even if it's nothing but the government." As far back as mid-July several Members of Parliament with whom I talked were convinced that a National Government was the most probable result of the inevitable impasse. Not only among the radical critics within the Independent Labor Party but among more conservative Members, it was often taken for granted that Mr. MacDonald would have no scruples against entering a three-party Cabinet if he could swing his party's right wing behind him; but few believed he would go so far as to do it against the expressed wish of the huge trade unions.

The policy of attempting to govern in the name of labor, but at the continuous sacrifice of working-class interests, had gone to lengths which, if foreseen when the party assumed office, would hardly have been sanctioned. Nobody has been happy about it; Mr. Henderson notoriously has been sick of the minority parliamentary position for months, as only a man could be sick of it who was charged with the difficult job of holding intact the industrial organization of the party. Those *enfants terribles,* Brockway, Maxton, Wise, and others of the I. L. P., had been sturdily predicting that the policy of compromise would in the long run be found disastrous. The Trades Union Congress leaders did not wish to utter advance comments on the Government's acts, and were criticizing the I. L. P. right up to the great breach for prejudging the Ministry's deeds. Nevertheless the radicals were proved to be sound in their analysis, and when convinced that Mr. MacDonald was bringing them a plan for an onslaught on that element of the population least capable of bearing it, they found it far too much.

While one hears, of course, such expressions as "It's hard to quit office once you have held it," there is a general appreciation of the basic sincerity which prompted the moves made by MacDonald, Snowden, and even J. H. Thomas. But from labor's viewpoint, consider the enormity of their choice. It is not merely that one may go back to the writings of MacDonald, as of Snowden, and pull out fiery paragraphs castigating the very attitudes they now are taking. It is not only that MacDonald has lost friends by his overbearing personal manner, his tendency to hold grudges, his fatal ability to couple reactionary acts with idealistic, radical phrases, his intolerance of dissent. Officially he has been forcing an ostracism of the protestants within the ranks. On March 28 at Glasgow, he declared that such a thing as Labor Party members voting against their own Government in critical divisions must stop. He was referring explicitly to the I. L. P., whose policy of refusing to accept the instructions of the Standing Orders Committee of the Parliamentary Labor Party, when those orders violated the declared policy of the party as previously outlined in party conferences, was expected, until the crisis, to lead to the I. L. P.'s expulsion this autumn. Though the I. L. P. had published a carefully documented list of critical divisions on which 122 Labor Members had voted against the Government without reprimand, this only seemed to add to official impatience. In the Glasgow speech Mr. MacDonald further said: "The man who criticizes his colleagues in such a way that he does not help them but pushes ammunition into the possession of the enemy, is not the sort of man who is of assistance to the Government or the movement, which is greater than the Government."

These words, as specifically as any others, will certainly come home to roost. The former Labor Cabinet members who have now taken posts in the Emergency Government do not today embrace the view that the labor movement itself possesses superior importance. The Trades Union Congress was the voting mainstay of the Labor Government, and is the heaviest contributor to the campaign war chest. The secession from MacDonaldism led by Henderson, representing the trade-union bodies, and A. V. Alexander as an informal representative of the great cooperative movement, is too portentous to leave Mr. MacDonald the least weight in his arguments. He is not now simply giving ammunition to the enemy; he is pointing the gun at the working class which elevated him to power.

For several days prior to the fateful conference between the T. U. C. Council and the Prime Minister, I talked at various times with one of Britain's most famous trade-union leaders. I spent several hours with him just before the meeting took place. Again and again we reverted to the pending crisis, and invariably he reiterated his two-fold determination: to preserve an attitude of fairness and open-mindedness; but, none the less, to resist to the utmost, cost what it may, any cuts in social services. "If we yielded to any such proposals," he said, "the Labor Party would soon be dead, and justifiably." The familiarity of such men with the Prime Minister's characteristic procedure was interestingly revealed. "What MacDonald will do," this moderate trade-union leader predicted, "is this. He will tell us that a dire emergency exists and, without giving us any facts, ask us to take his word for it. He will sidetrack any alternative suggestions to those which he will bring us as a *fait accompli.* He will have talked in some detail with the Conservatives and Liberals, and have worked out a program that he will expect us to sign on the dotted line."

It must not be forgotten that the unions' grievances were of long standing, and that in recent months they had begun to reassert some of the Socialist demands which in the

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early days of the second Labor Ministry they had tolerantly put in the background. They had found that not only was Mr. MacDonald reluctant to run parliamentary risks for his still-professed socialism, but in definite crises of the workers the Government appeared inclined to put the heavy end of the stick on the laboring people—as, for example, in the hours controversy of the coal miners, the anti-stretch-out strike of the Lancashire weavers, and the wage reductions of the railwaymen. The trades-disputes bill introduced into the House last winter and strangled there, which was intended to repeal the restrictive measures passed by a Tory Government, was handled by a Government which had fought desperately against the mandate laid upon it by the Llandudno Labor Party Conference last fall.

Much has been made by the pro-tariff press in Great Britain of the expressed willingness of certain labor leaders to sanction tariffs as an alternative to wage cuts or reductions in the social services. This is not entirely a case of the wish being father to the thought, for the crusade to put over tariffs in Britain has indubitably made some inroads on the rank and file of the workers' organizations. It must be remembered, however, that no labor leader of consequence in Britain today will stand for protective tariffs. Some of them will agree to a revenue tariff, but only with positive reservations—and these reservations must not be ignored. Such influential union leaders as Ernest Bevin and A. J. Cook have made it plain that, in being willing to support a revenue tariff as the only alternative to assaults on the social services—were this the only alternative—they would even then demand, as a prerequisite, a thorough reorganization of industry along Socialist lines. As a matter of fact, the revenue tariff never entered seriously into the final split, not only because of Mr. Snowden's adamantine opposition, but because those who parted company with him have no real faith in tariffs as a solution of the present difficulties.

On July 7, by a vote of seventy to six, the conference of the National Union of Railwaymen (Mr. J. H. Thomas's organization) sent an urgent request to the Government (without the blessing, you may be sure, of Mr. Thomas) for an "early and favorable reply" to the joint request of the rail unions for the nationalization of all forms of transport. "We want an answer from the Government," said C. T. Cramp, General Secretary, emphatically. But no reply was forthcoming. On the very brink of the Cabinet crisis, the Economic Committee of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress published a report on which much work had been previously spent. This report reflects the general belief in England, reinforced by such expert economists as Gustav Cassel and those of the historic Macmillan Committee on Finance, that the fall in wholesale prices and the world depression itself are in considerable degree attributable to the shrinkage of gold production, and, even more directly, the drain of gold into the coffers of the United States and France. A million denials by American bankers could not now undo the accepted view that our own banks laid down the law to England, demanding cuts in the "dole"—in fact, even the anti-labor press throughout Britain has very generally upheld the American banks and simply said, "Of course! What else should they do?"

MacDonald and Snowden have dedicated themselves to the familiar proposition that the prosperity of a country's working class depends first and foremost upon the prosperity of the financial and wealthy class, and have found themselves laboring, as all must who hold this view, to give the latter group a prior claim upon the state. Mr. MacDonald's project for "equal sacrifices" has about it, superficially, strong appeal. It will undoubtedly exert an appreciable influence in the United States. But it buckles under careful scrutiny. The organ of the I. L. P. lost no time in jumping upon the phrase. "To talk of a tax on the rentier and a reduction of unemployment benefit," it said, "or what amounts to the same thing, a tightening of the regulations against the unemployed worker, as 'an equality of sacrifice' is to talk hypocritical cant. In the one case, reduction of the rentier's interest may mean at the most inconvenience, but in the case of the unemployed every penny of reduction means further deprivation of the necessaries of life, and actual suffering."

The bald fact, the central fact, remains. And that is this: that an unemployed breadwinner who has a wife and two children, at present, has to get along on thirty shillings a week. England is not a cheap country to live in; its price level approximates that of the United States and Holland rather than that of Belgium and Italy. This same British family, if it has an additional child, will receive the munificent extra allowance of two shillings weekly. A jobless working girl of seventeen will be kept in clothes, food, accessories, and the straight and narrow path by the princely allowance of seven shillings. These are the rates which must be cut 10 per cent.

In contributions toward the Unemployment Insurance Fund, each worker pays sevenpence per week; employers pay eightpence; and the state pays seven-and-a-halfpence. This falls short of enough by approximately $200,000,000 to $225,000,000 a year, which has to be borrowed by the Government. Repeated borrowing has run the total of indebtedness up to almost $400,000,000, while the number of the unemployed mounts steadily toward the three million mark. The Royal Commission not only recommended elimination of actual abuses (and minor abuses there have been), but suggested that some $150,000,000 a year might be saved by lopping off benefits and increasing contributions.

The employed worker might be more amenable to increases in his contributions had he not seen his wages already subjected to a series of ruthless dockings. All of the groups interested in putting further burdens on labor have discreetly passed over this unpleasant trifle. Yet it is a fact, attested by the official *Ministry of Labor Gazette*, that "in the industries for which statistics are regularly compiled" there were wage decreases affecting 2,003,000 workers between January and June. Every week these workers averaged a total loss of $1,130,000. Against this, some 22,500 workers received pay increases reaching the magnificent total of $3,500. However, in the month of July alone, 614,000 wage earners suffered reductions of $415,000 a week. The situation, counting in unreported cuts, is really worse than this.

It is true, on the other hand, that the middle class in Britain is heavily taxed. Yet how does the theory of "equal sacrifice" work out? The *Daily Herald*, now that the Labor Government is out, has become a stalwart champion of the trade unions; it points out that a married man with three children, whose income is $5,000 a year, still has more than $4,500 left after his sacrificial income tax has been taken away, and submits that while his lot is unquestionably sad,

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it is less poignant than that of the jobless worker whose family stands to come down to a living income of $360 per annum. Other spokesmen of labor have not failed to suggest the possibility of reductions in war debt payments, or wholesale slashes in the armaments charges, which amount to more than half a billion dollars annually.

If anyone could have thought that this crisis was simply a matter of abstract mathematics or a formula for justice, he would have been taught better by subsequent events. Within ten minutes of the announcement that Mr. MacDonald's little band of former Labor ministers were going to be reinforced by a couple of Liberals and four Conservatives, who, as a council of high priests would perform the rites of sacrifice around the fanes of Lombard Street, the Tory press took Messrs. MacDonald, Snowden, Sankey, and Thomas warmly to its bosom. In twenty-four hours these erstwhile suspects were invested with a new sublimity. The forces of big business, aristocracy, imperialism, and reaction had accomplished a big step in the great campaign they have been waging strenuously against the socialization of British life and the rise of the working class, and, best of all, the dirty work was going to be handled largely by former Labor leaders, thus freeing their own henchmen from direct responsibility.

Knowing that Mr. MacDonald dislikes Gandhi and that Sir Samuel Hoare, the new Secretary of State for India, won his spurs by espionage in Russia, they could envisage an end to "weakness" in India. Mr. Neville Chamberlain, once a Health Minister under the Tories, could be relied on to find cuts in the "extravagant" public-health enterprises undertaken by Arthur Greenwood. As First Lord of the Admiralty, that arch-manipulator, Austen Chamberlain, assuredly would be able in one month to inspire the permanent officials with the proper spirit. Sir Henry Betterton, who served six years as Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Labor, would know how to check this riotous nonsense with the workers. And so it went, these hopes, in all probability, being somewhat exaggerated. Already signs were not wanting that every effort will be made to prolong the life of the Emergency Cabinet as long as possible; for a combination of all the Conservatives, most of the Liberals, and a few Laborites in the House, driving ahead with a moderate Tory program, was calculated to guarantee a Tory holiday.

The immediate effects of the Labor Party split may not be good in the next election. The peripheral labor voter will be bewildered. But all the same, Mr. MacDonald has saved his party from that disease of compromise which was eating away its vitals. It is highly improbable that the experiment of trying to emulate the proverbial pin—pointed in one direction and headed in the other—will again allure the Labor politician. Though delicate matters need to be resolved, and will take many weeks for careful handling, a unity is now possible within the Labor ranks that has not been conceivable since 1923. Labor has learned a bitter but necessary lesson. It has other lessons yet to learn, but it may learn them at a cheaper cost than could have been paid had the fiasco gone on further. And now labor can come back—not at once, to be sure, since even the return of those thousands to the polls who from disgust have been abstaining in recent by-elections, would hardly counteract MacDonald's blow at party prestige. But when labor does come back, it may come with a surge of power and realism. Meantime, let no one think it impotent. For if the Tories really count on that, they, too, will come in for a grim surprise.

Free Trade and France*

By ROBERT DELL

Paris, September 3

FRANCE is as great an obstacle to economic disarmament in Europe as to military disarmament. No country is more stubbornly protectionist. This is not surprising, since protectionism is the economic form of nationalism. What is surprising is that the French fail to recognize how inconsistent their economic policy is with their talk about the United States of Europe. Some politicians and papers of the Left even talk of a European customs union and incidentally, rebuke Germany and Austria for their wickedness in trying to prevent the realization of that ideal by taking the first step towards it; but whenever the Government proposes an increase in any import duty, it is carried by overwhelming majorities in both Houses of Parliament. Rather more than a year ago the French Government obtained from Parliament without serious opposition a great increase in the tariff generally, which had already been increased in 1926, by 30 per cent each time; and in July, just before the end of the parliamentary session, the import duties on wheat and other cereals were doubled and those on certain other foodstuffs greatly increased. In these circumstances it is not surprising that France has led the opposition at Geneva to every proposal for a reduction or limitation of tariffs, including the harmless "tariff truce." It is true that Loucheur, on behalf of the French Government, signed the attenuated convention stabilizing existing duties for a very short period, but at the economic conference at Geneva last March the French Government wrecked the convention.

France has no doubt suffered less from protection than most countries on account of the extent and variety of her natural resources, which make her potentially the wealthiest country in Europe. At a pinch she could be almost self-supporting. She could grow all her own food, she has now more iron ore than all the rest of Europe put together, and has within her own borders most of the important raw materials. Cotton of course has to be imported, and also petrol and a certain amount of coal, but the need for importing coal is diminishing with the development of French waterpower, potentially much larger than that of any other European country. The development of hydro-electric power tends to some extent to displace industry, which before the war was mainly in the north, and smokeless factories have sprung up in villages in the Alps, the Jura, and the Pyrenees. Never-

* The fourth of a series of articles on free trade. The fifth, on Austria and Free Trade, by Dr. Karl Polanyi, of Vienna, will appear in our next issue.—EDITOR THE NATION.

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theless France needs imports, for she has much to export. The wine industry, which is one of the most important French industries, is suffering severely from the loss of the American and Russian markets, and the partial loss of the markets in Germany and other European countries impoverished by the war and its sequel. The only remedy that the French wine-growers can think of is an increase in import duties and further restrictions on the importation of wines even from Algeria and Tunisia. If they would only combine and start cooperative wholesale agencies in England, for example, they could eliminate the middleman, reduce wine prices in England so much as greatly to increase the sale, and at the same time make more profit themselves. The high prices in England are to a great extent due to the middlemen, that is, the French wine-exporters, who make huge profits. But the French wine-growers, like too many other French producers, have become so accustomed to looking to the state to "protect" them that they never think of trying to help themselves by new methods.

Two factors have made France a great industrial country since the war—the recovery of Alsace-Lorraine and, indirectly, the German invasion. The first result of the occupation, which affected the most industrial part of France, was that during the war new industrial undertakings had to be created elsewhere, so that the industrial equipment was greatly increased in the rest of France and also modernized, for the new factories were much better equipped than the old ones. The post-war consequence of the invasion was the complete reequipment on the most modern lines of the industries of the devastated region, which has now an economic capacity far greater than it had in 1914. The economic power and productive capacity of France have thus been greatly increased. French industrial production in 1929 was 39 per cent higher than in 1913, the increase being particularly marked in the mechanical industries. The recovery of Alsace-Lorraine doubled the French capacity in iron ore, added to France highly developed metallurgical and other industries, increased the cotton spindles by nearly 25 per cent, the cotton printing machines by 100 per cent, and the woolen and worsted capacity by 20 per cent, and gave France potash mines and an oil field. By 1927 the production of iron ore in France (45,482,000 metric tons) was larger than it had been in 1913 in the pre-war French territory and Alsace-Lorraine together.

Free trade would undoubtedly benefit French industry as a whole; although, as in all countries, a few industries would no doubt suffer from it, and a transition period would be necessary to give them time to adapt themselves, if necessary with financial aid from the state. Universal free trade would inevitably lead each country to specialize in the industries best suited to it, as the different parts of each country do now. France is such a varied country and has such immense natural resources that free trade would probably cause less dislocation in her industry than in that of any other European country. Free trade with Germany would be greatly to the advantage of the Lorraine metallurgical industries, for it would reunite Lorraine iron and Ruhr coal, whose marriage was dissolved by the erection of a tariff barrier between Lorraine and Germany. France has now the coal of the Saar territory, but will almost certainly lose it in 1935, when the plebiscite will be held to decide the future of the territory. Free trade would of course put an end to the dumping of French exporters, for free trade makes it impossible to export at lower prices than those on the home market at the expense of the home consumer, but on the other hand it would open to them all the markets of Europe or the world, as the case might be.

Already the hey-day of the French exporters is past. Increased import duties have failed to check the decline of exports, which, it is interesting to note, has been much greater both in value and volume than the decline in imports. In the first six months of this year the exports were 29 per cent lower in value and 18 per cent lower in volume than in the first six months of last year, whereas the imports decreased 13½ per cent in value and only 1.4 per cent in volume. It is significant that the fall in the exports was particularly in the category of manufactured goods, and that in the imports, mainly in raw materials—the imports of which decreased 30 per cent in value and 8 per cent in volume. It is equally significant that, whereas the decline in the value of imports between 1929 and 1930 (first six months) was nearly 12½ per cent, almost the same as that between 1930 and 1931, the value of the exports declined between 1929 and 1930 by not quite 8½ per cent. So after the great increase in the tariff in the summer of last year the decline in exports has been multiplied by three and a half and that in imports has remained almost unchanged. And highly intelligent people in England advocate protection to encourage exports! To complete our comparisons, the value of exports was 34.3 per cent lower in the first six months of this year than in the corresponding period of 1929 and that of imports 24.2 per cent lower. At present the French exporters have the advantage, except in the case of a very few articles, of the open British market. France sells more to Great Britain than to any other country—nearly one-fifth of her whole exports—and far more than to all the French colonies and protectorates put together, and buys from Great Britain more than from any other country except the United States. If Great Britain should ever adopt protection, it would be a heavy blow to French exporters.

In spite, however, of the development of French industry since the war, France is still predominantly an agricultural country. About two-fifths of the active French population are engaged in agriculture, including wine-growing, and the majority of them are peasant proprietors. The peasant proprietor in France and every other country where he exists is an uncompromising opponent of free trade, and, from his point of view, he is right, for it would mean his destruction. From the point of view of the general interest, he ought to disappear, for he is the economic curse of Europe and a bulwark of obscurantist conservatism, but he can hardly be expected to see it. Nevertheless peasant proprietorship is doomed in any case, for small individual production is as uneconomic, wasteful, and out-of-date in agriculture as in other industries, and cannot compete with production on a large scale in Canada, Argentina, and now in Russia. The agricultural crisis in central and eastern Europe is really the crisis of peasant proprietorship. In all the new countries carved out of the old Austrian and Russian empires the great landowners, who at least were able to exploit their land efficiently, have been replaced by small owners, often ex-servicemen with no knowledge of agriculture. They had no capital and had to borrow it from their respective governments, so that their land is all mortgaged.

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In many cases the amount of land given to them is so small —perhaps a couple of acres—that they can hardly make a bare living, and their agricultural methods are primitive.

The French peasant farmers are more advanced than the peasant farmers of eastern Europe, but they too cannot survive unless they radically change their methods. A few months ago there was a demand on the part of the Norman dairy farmers for increased duties on dairy produce because Danish butter was three francs a kilogramme cheaper than Norman butter on the Paris market. Yet the prosperous Danish farmers have a higher standard of living than any French farmers and they are not protected, for there are no duties in Denmark on imports of dairy produce, so that they cannot "dump." Their success in underselling the Norman dairy farmers is simply an example of the triumph of cooperative production on a large scale over small individual production. Not only is the Danish butter cheaper than the French, but its quality is more certain because it is standardized. The only salvation for the French peasant farmers is in cooperation, but they will not hear of it. They cannot even be induced to combine in a given district for the purpose of buying agricultural machinery, to be rented to each of them in turn. The consequence is that, as very few French farmers can afford to buy agricultural machinery and, even if they could, it would not pay to buy it for such small holdings, men and women continue to do work that would be much better done by machinery, and in many parts of France farmers still plough with oxen. It is picturesque, but hardly practical. There is more agricultural machinery in the former devastated region than elsewhere because the victims of the war received in most cases compensation many times the value of their real losses, with the result that they started again with a capital such as they had never before possessed in their lives.

It is becoming more and more difficult to find Frenchmen willing to do agricultural work, especially as the conditions in which agricultural laborers live are often abominable. I know places in Normandy where the laborers have no homes. They sleep in bunks over the cattle-troughs in the farm stables, take their meals in the farm-house, and spend their evenings drinking bad brandy in a café because they have nowhere else to go. Twenty years ago French agriculture already suffered from serious shortness of labor, and now only imported foreign labor enables it to carry on. Moreover, the sons and daughters of the peasant farmers themselves refuse in increasing numbers to spend their lives in grinding and unnecessary toil. Between 1866 and 1911 the rural population of France decreased by about four and a half millions; the decrease continues, and is checked only by foreign immigration. Most of the sixty-one departments in which in 1929 the deaths exceeded the births were rural departments. The death rate is as a rule higher in rural than in urban districts, partly because of the insanitary conditions in which most of the rural population live and their uncleanly and unhygienic habits, partly because the proportion of old people is higher on account of the emigration of the young to the towns, which also reduces the birth rate.

In short, peasant proprietorship is breaking down in France, and the industrialization of French agriculture is an urgent necessity. What is needed is a vast system of state-aided cooperation, but there is little hope of it for years to come. It would have to be imposed on the peasants, and no government or parliament will dare to impose it. Successive governments and parliaments will probably go on raising the import duties on foodstuffs until the consumers revolt and insist on the collectivization of agriculture on the Russian model.

No French political party dares to talk of free trade. One of the least pleasant consequences of protectionism is the corruption that it engenders. All the "interests" have their representatives in the French Chamber whose business it is to promote the interests of their clients without regard to those of the community in general. These representatives are of all parties—for instance, the chief representative of the wine-growing interest is a Socialist deputy called Barthe, who sits for a wine-growing constituency. The representatives of each interest are always on the alert to oppose any reduction in the import duties on the products of their clients and to propose their increase whenever there is an opportunity. If the representatives of one interest wish to increase the duties on their products, they have to compound with the representatives of the other interests, who would otherwise oppose an increase in which they did not share. The consequence is that all the individual interests combine against the interest of the nation and there is a general increase in the tariff.

France is still less affected by the world economic crisis than any other European country, but she is nevertheless affected by it, as the decline in French foreign trade shows. There are other symptoms of trade depression and shortness of money (which indeed are evident to the most casual observer), such as the fall in the revenue from indirect taxation and that in the receipts of the railway companies, which may, however, be partly due to the competition of motor transport. The revenue from indirect taxation has been falling for some time past. In the first three months of the current financial year (April-June) it was, it is true, not quite 2½ per cent lower than in the corresponding quarter of 1930, but the decline would have been much larger but for the enormous increase in the revenue from import duties, resulting from the increase in their rates, which is by no means a sign of prosperity. An infallible test of trade conditions is the tax on turnover, levied on the gross receipts of all businesses, and the revenue from that tax continues to fall steadily. In June, for example, the total revenue from indirect taxation was higher by about $8,800,000 (7.7 per cent) than in June, 1930, but the revenue from the tax on turnover fell by about $3,300,000 (12 per cent), whereas that from import duties increased by $14,400,000 (147 per cent), although the value of the imports in June was 6 per cent less than in June, 1930. These figures show how immense has been the increase in the French tariff and what a crushing burden it imposes on the French consumer. The consequence is that, whereas in all other European countries prices have fallen heavily, in France the cost of living is still rising, and is probably at present the highest in Europe. Food prices, in particular, are much higher than in England or Germany. A further consequence is a decline in real salaries and wages. Real wages are now at least no higher than in 1913 and real salaries are considerably lower. And heaven knows that salaries and wages were low enough in France before the war. There have been many strikes recently for an increase in wages, but they have failed, for organized labor in France is weak and di-

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vided. The majority of the French people—the middle classes and the industrial proletariat—are being sacrificed as usual for the benefit of capitalists and peasant farmers.

Unemployment is undoubtedly on the increase. The official figures are valueless, for they give the number only of those in receipt of unemployment relief, which is given in few places in France, as it rests with each mayor to decide whether it shall be given or not. There are various estimates of the total number of persons wholly or partially unemployed. It must run into several hundred thousand. There has been much unemployment in the motor industry, which has been doing very badly, but it is reported that the motor factories are now in many cases making munitions. I have not yet been able to verify the report, which I have only just heard, but it is not at all improbable, for the French General Staff is making feverish preparations which, if we did not know that France has signed the Treaty of Locarno and the Kellogg Pact, would suggest, let us say, military operations in the near future. There are probably more people partially than wholly unemployed. At Grenoble, the center of the French glove industry, which employs a large proportion of the inhabitants, the employees in the glove factories, when I was there in June, were working only three days a week. It has, however, to be remembered that at the 1926 census there were 2,500,000 foreign residents in France, the large majority of whom were wage-earners, and, as trade declines, the foreign workers can be gradually eliminated. France does not, like England and Germany, suffer from over-population, and that is one of the chief reasons for her superior economic position.

Bad trade, and the increasing difficulty for the bulk of the urban population in making both ends meet, may some time or other cause a movement against high protection, but it is unlikely to succeed. The great industrial interests and the peasant farmers are all-powerful in parliament and have every political party in their grip. The Socialists, who should be the first to move, will be the last, for they are making great headway in the rural districts and dare not offend the peasants, whom they have already assured that peasant proprietorship is quite compatible with Socialism. I am disposed to think that France will be the last country to accept free trade.

Gun-Rule in Kentucky

By HERBERT ABEL

ON May 5, a band of deputies swooped down on the striking mining community of Evarts, Kentucky. Pistol shots flashed across the highway and three of the attacking coal-guard crew lay dead by the side of the road. The circumstances of the shooting have led many to wonder whether the raiders met their death at the hands of their own brethren. Especially are they wondering because, as a consequence of the killings, the State militia was hurriedly transported to the scene, a consummation always devoutly to be wished by coal operators. But the law allows itself no such idle speculations. A special grand jury was promptly impanelled, and Judge D. C. Jones of the Circuit Court, whose wife, as stated in an affidavit in possession of the American Civil Liberties Union, is a member of the Coal Operators' Association, requested some 100 indictments, 60 of them for murder. Within the next few days, twenty men were picked up in various parts of the county, charged with the murder, and held without bond. And let it be said, in defense of the soldiers, that the picking up was not so indiscriminate as it might have seemed at first. Not when one remembers that Joe Cawood, one of the men arrested, had the temerity to oppose the present sheriff, J. H. Blair, in the last election. And not when one remembers that Police Chief Asa Cusic, also charged with the murder, was a well-known supporter of the miners.

Several happy coincidences of this sort having occurred, the twenty men stood up in court on August 17 and heard the attorney for the Commonwealth cry out to the good citizens of Harlan County to "put the cold chill of steel down the backs of the criminal element in this country." Whether or not you belong to the criminal element in Kentucky seems to depend upon a variety of factors of which the complexity baffles the lay mind. That is probably what accounts for the failure of the grand jury to return a single indictment in connection with the death of a miner who fell in the Evarts pistol battle. And to this incomprehensibly subtle definition of a criminal, Bill Randolph owes his liberty—Bill Randolph, company killer par excellence, with four notches in his belt, and five additional markings of varying depths, representative of occasions on which his intentions were most honorable, but his aim not of the best. The beginning of the Harlan strike found this worthy in the Pikeville jail, where he was awaiting trial on a charge of killing one and shooting two more in a dance hall in Pike County. Such a jewel was not to be lost. The citizens of Harlan raised $25,000, bonded him out, and he was placed in the employ of the guards of the Three Point Coal Company, owned and operated by Elmer Hall, brother-in-law of Judge Jones. One night Randolph wandered into Joe Chasteen's lunchroom, a miners' meeting place, and shot the owner dead. And still more mysterious and intricate grow the workings of Kentucky logic. For, in addition to Randolph, who was taken into custody temporarily and then again released on bond, fourteen miners were arrested. Ten were later released, but the other four are among the crowd of over 100 defendants against whom 335 criminal charges are pending.

It becomes evident that the only thing that is going to stop Sheriff Blair's wholesale arrests on framed-up charges is the lack of jail space. And God pity the poor miners then. For if the court doesn't get you, the gunmen will. And conversely, if the gunmen don't, the court will. This perfect working agreement has landed some seventy persons in jail on charges of criminal syndicalism or "banding and confederating" (in addition to those held for murder).

Gill Green, a colored preacher and labor organizer, finds himself in jail, held without bond, although the murder which he is supposed to have committed took place while he was talking to the sheriff in the latter's private office. Arnold

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Johnson, a representative of the American Civil Liberties Union, has made the unfortunate discovery that criminal syndicalism consists of having in one's possession a pamphlet of that organization; G. I. Lane, a miner, has made the equally unfortunate discovery that it consists of not having any pamphlets in one's possession. Lane's house was searched on June 16 by Sheriff Blair's deputies, who overlooked the technical inconsistency involved in the fact that their warrant called for house No. 13, while Lane lives in No. 28. Turning the house upside down and discovering no literature, the deputies arrived at the inescapable conclusion that Lane was a dangerous criminal. This theory they communicated to their chief who, seeing Lane in Harlan a few days later, where he had gone to arrange bond for his friend A. R. Steele (who had also run afoul of the criminal syndicalism laws), called him into the County Judge's office. There he was searched again, and again nothing was found. Thus the conclusion of the deputies was upheld in all details. Sheriff Blair immediately swore out a warrant of arrest, and held Lane in $5,000 bond.

The other case, involving Arnold Johnson, was equally clearcut. When he first arrived in Harlan, one of the members of the Operators' Association demanded that he be held and investigated. Sheriff Blair and Judge Jones merely advised him to leave the county "damned quick," assuring him that there would be no difficulty. As the weeks went on, this advice became more insistent, Johnson being assured that, if he did not leave, some little difficulty was likely to arise. The full import of this became clear to him when, in the last week of July, twenty-eight out-of-town gunmen were imported to "shoot, kill, and slay the 'reds' in Harlan County." Johnson, who had already been threatened in the presence of Judge H. H. Howard, was one of those picked for the sacrifice. The signals must have become mixed, for on August 6 Johnson was arrested by Sheriff Blair and lodged in the comparative safety of the county jail, thus giving the lie to the sheriff's prophetic utterance that Johnson was likely to "get the road." The crime was the possession of a pamphlet entitled "What Do You Mean—Free Speech?" The answer to this question, if everything runs according to the operators' schedule in the Kentucky courts, will be twenty-one years in the penitentiary at hard labor.

Arrested with Johnson, and on the same charge, was Mrs. Jessie Wakefield, a representative of the International Labor Defense. The day before they got her for criminal syndicalism, a carefully placed stick of dynamite got her automobile, which was carrying relief to the miners. These dynamite explosions have been occurring with surprising frequency. On July 29, one took place in front of the home of a local union leader. On the night of August 11, a National Miners' Union kitchen in Evarts, which had been feeding 400 people daily, was blown to bits. Sheriff Blair announced that this was an accident, and implied that it was regrettable.

He has never thought it regrettable that, during the first month of the strike, John Gross, a local organizer for the United Mine Workers, on the pretext of being taken to see the sheriff, was led to a lonely hillside, where his captors threatened him with death if he failed to leave the county; that on August 8, four deputy sheriffs kidnapped a Negro worker and union leader, Harry Thornton, threatened him, slugged him brutally, and brought him back to jail; that on August 11, they administered the same treatment to his brother-in-law, McKinley Balden, dropping him at the county line, and carefully pointing out with their guns the direction he was to take. Especially has Blair made no mention of two incidents that come even closer to his own doorstep—the shooting from ambush of Bruce Crawford, editor from Norton Gap, West Virginia, against whose paper he had threatened, only a few days before, to bring suit for libel; and the slugging of Tom Connors, a representative of the General Defense Committee of Chicago. Connors was arrested June 20, while sitting on the porch of J. I. Lane in Evarts, and was immediately escorted to the sheriff's office, where Blair proceeded to rain a shower of blows upon him, inflicting a deep, freely-bleeding wound in the side of his head. Blair then pulled out his gun and significantly announced to his prisoner that it was time to "say his prayers." Five hours later, still having failed to comply with this formality, Connors was led into an automobile waiting outside. At the State line he was ordered out of the car, and left to his own resources. It was not until midnight that he reached the town of Appalachia, Virginia, and not until the following morning that he first received medical attention for his wounds.

These are only the outstanding incidents of a systematic, unrelenting campaign. The forces of the coal guards roam the countryside at night, terrorizing the inhabitants. Meetings are broken up with tear-gas bombs, raids are conducted almost every night with their consequent toll of deaths, houses are broken into and property confiscated, the mails are tampered with, the slightest resistance is met with the force of guns, and all this is justified by a state of mind which led one of the mine superintendents to say "You can't reconciliate with rattlesnakes." This is the state of mind of the operators, the sheriff, the coal guards, and above all, of Judge Jones. Continually he throws aside his judicial robes and speaks in the role of an operator. But dare to mention his connection with the coal interests, as did Ben B. Golden, the defense lawyer, and you find you are guilty of contempt of court. He openly curses the organizations which are fighting for the basic rights of the miners, he orders his opponents to leave the county, he refuses to vacate the bench despite as patent and open a prejudice as any judge has ever shown, and he tells prospective jurors that if they "haven't enough backbone to enforce the law, he'll get someone who will." Judge Jones stands alone, supreme, sufficient unto himself; he does not "need anyone from Russia or any warped, twisted individuals from New York to tell us how to run our government."

And only when we consider all this do we probably come to the real story behind the motion for a change of venue to Montgomery County, 100 miles away, which on August 20 astonished the defendants and their attorney equally. Montgomery County is inhabited by farmers, notorious haters of everything that smacks of radicalism, while in Harlan County it is conceivable that a juror sympathetic to the miners might have escaped the eagle eye of the prosecutor. And in the second place, 100 miles is a long distance to walk, and the defense has no money with which to pay for the transportation of its witnesses.

All this the miners knew. But there in Harlan County sits Judge Jones, immoveable as a rock. If the miners had ever really asked for a change of venue, it would only have been because they had decided to escape what they, in their

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blindness, thought was the devil, and to take their chances on the deep blue sea. And that is exactly what the State thought they would do. But something went wrong, and when Commonwealth Attorney Brock, in the trial of William Burnett, charged with murder, "agreed to the motion of the defense" for a change of venue, he agreed to a motion that had never been made. All the efforts of Defense Attorney Golden had been directed towards taking the cases out of the hands of Judge Jones; wilfully Brock misinterpreted this to mean a desire to take them out of Harlan County altogether. Golden's protests were of no avail; the great favor that was being done to him was crammed down his throat. Thirty other murder cases are due to come to trial before the month is up, and presumably they too will be transferred to Montgomery County.

There, in the first week of November, the charges will be heard. And there the good farming-folk of Kentucky will decide whether, in the immortal words of Sheriff Blair, "we will surrender the country that our fathers founded here in the mountains to a lot of imported destroyers of faith in God; destroyers of trust in all government except Russia."

In the Driftway

OUR worship of the goddess Hygeia has reached lengths far beyond the deserts of even that august lady. Thus the Drifter was saddened but not surprised to see the three-year-old son of one of his friends rush up to his mother the other day, holding out a finger on which was barely discernible a scratch about a quarter of an inch in length. "Put some red stuff on it," he cried in an anguished voice. The spectacle of babies begging for disinfectants is one to give pause for thought. Nor are babies the only sufferers from our new religion. Three children aged ten, twelve, and fourteen were being transported the other day by motor car from one part of Connecticut to another. When they passed through a town they held their handkerchiefs over their mouths and noses, to "keep out the paralysis germs."

* * * * *

THESE are not, the Drifter maintains, exceptional cases. Children in sanitary America are brought up on sterilized water, fed milk out of a boiled bottle, burdened with the necessity of keeping out in the sunshine and fresh air, and bandaged and cleansed and swabbed and antitoxined all their young lives. It all started, probably, with the rite of hand-washing before meals, practiced for centuries by some religious sects and taken over wholeheartedly by the worshippers of the new deity. Children Must Wash Their Hands Before Eating. It was blazoned in letters of fire upon the hearts of their parents, and those worthies transferred the stencilled tattoo to the hearts of their offspring. Now the fact is that to make hands surgically clean, as any operating nurse can tell you, it is necessary—or so the legend runs—to scrub vigorously with green soap for five—or is it ten?—minutes, and then to don sterilized rubber gloves, being careful not to touch the outside of either glove with the bare hand, a technique that calls for the most careful practice before it is perfected. So far in our hygienic civilization, no child is compelled to perform the rite in just this way. On the contrary, a child dips his hands in lukewarm water, rubs them briefly with a cake of soap, and dries them casually on a blackening towel. How dreadfully unhygienic this process is, only a thoughtful scientist fully realizes. The way to obtain correct scientific data on the point would be to boil for five minutes the hands of some child who had just washed according to his own notions, and to analyze the germs deposited in the water. But this method has its impractical side.

* * * * *

THE Drifter would not quite dare come out against all hand-washing whatever. He has too many friends who are also mothers and fathers; and he has seen enough children's hands that were at least aesthetically improved by ablution. But he would like to oppose, flatly and completely, hand-washing as a rite, and the injection of antitoxins as a rite, and the blind acceptance of every theory of infection that is thrown out by any scientist, be he responsible or not. There is danger that a child in the vicinity of New York City may contract infantile paralysis. But it is nothing like so great as the danger that he may contract pneumonia, measles, whooping cough, scarlet fever, or rheumatic heart—each in its own way an affection to reckon with. It is true that a small cut may result in general septicaemia. But the threat of hypochondria in a nervous child who must have his disinfectant is also to be considered. The Drifter merely asks that the new religion be tempered with common sense.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

To a Critic of Reviewers

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: It would be delightful if reviewers had the command of space given to Mr. Sinclair Lewis; they might then list *all* the names in any anthology—or in any four anthologies such as the series from Vermont which I reviewed in *The Nation* for August 19. But since the number of magazine pages is limited by economic necessity, the reviewer of such a series is likely to emphasize the volume which makes the most important contribution (in this series, the collection of ballads from Vermont) and to pass over the other volumes with a brief indication of their purpose. Now it happens that Mr. Lewis as a critic of reviewers has chosen to pass over the ballads, the poems, the prose collected in the three other volumes of these Vermont anthologies and to emphasize the "Biographies," brief factual accounts of the lives of such great men as happened to be born in Vermont. So be it. But why should Mr. Lewis be so intense in his provincialism as to find only two great men from Pittsburgh when, in comparing relative populations, he says of Vermont, "about half as large as Pittsburgh whence cometh only Mellons and the pious Jim Davis." Surely were Mr. Lewis engaged in defense of Pittsburgh he would be able to find other names conspiring toward that city's greatness. Isn't it all a matter of point of view?

Certainly any reviewer would see (as I suspect Mr. Lewis of seeing and choosing to overlook) that an unfortunate slip which leads one to set down an "and" instead of a "by" does **not imply gross lack of knowledge. The biography of Ethan**

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Allen was written *by* Walter H. Crockett, who, since he is the editor of the collection, and since his name appears on the first page of text as author of the Ethan Allen biography—the first in the book—could hardly be mistaken, even by a reviewer, for a dead Vermont pioneer. My slip in using the wrong connective, however, gave Mr. Lewis an excellent springboard from which to jump not only at me but at the whole race of reviewers. He terms his attack strictly "impersonal," but it is to be noted that although Mr. Lewis is not named in the much discussed "Biographies," he *is* included in another volume of the same series, "Vermont Prose"—a fact which I neglected to mention. Here he is represented by his Address before the Rutland Rotary Club and by a letter in apology for the spoken style of the same and for its clichés.

I am grateful to Mr. Lewis for giving to a volume of rather dull biographies—biographies which might have been made illustrative of "the advantages of disurbanization" but which, as they stand, are illustrative of nothing—the importance he thinks it deserves. The moral of this tale would seem to be: don't write reviews in hot weather; they may overheat not altogether impersonal readers:

> Every writer suffers from this [incompetent reviewing] daily. Regarding his own work he does not, unless he is an Upton Sinclair, leap on a soap box and rage publicly.

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A Moral Tale

The Wet Parade. By Upton Sinclair. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

IN this pious work Mr. Sinclair undertakes a feat unprecedented in swell letters: he makes a Prohibition agent his hero. The gentleman is a Mr. Kip Tarleton, of an old but decayed Southern house. His mother, Mrs. Powhatan Tarleton, keeps a family hotel in New York, and Kip is the room-clerk therein. His father, old Pow, is a lusher, and in the end is floored by cerebral hemorrhage, with panplegia, cyanosis, pyrexia, coma, rigidity and exitus ensuing. The hotel closes and Kip is given a job as assistant superintendent on the Long Island estate of Mr. Fessenden, a connection by marriage. Mr. Fessenden is a pleasant fellow, but he too has a weakness for booze, and he gets it by landing it from the Rum Fleet on his own beach. One night there is a fight with hijackers, and the Fessenden watchman is killed. Mr. Fessenden sends for Kip and tells him what to say to the coroner. Kip agrees, but on the stand, cross-examined by a Methodist reformer from the nearby village, he blurts out the truth. For this he loses his post, and soon afterward becomes a Prohibition agent. A year or so later he is pistoled by "a big Italian, dark and unprepossessing."

A simple story, but yet one that bristles with difficulties for the moral theologian. What is to be thought of Kip's blabbing on Mr. Fessenden, his kinsman and benefactor? Was it compatible with the character of a Southern gentleman? Mr. Sinclair hints that it was, but offers no argument. I put it this way: could you imagine General Robert E. Lee doing it? Or Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard? Or even Booker T. Washington? I think not, but do not undertake to answer dogmatically. Perhaps the South, under Bishop Cannon, has changed. But what are we to think of Kip's wife, Maggie May, of the Louisiana Chilcotes, boozers all and very proud? Unlike her fathers, she is a fanatic for Law Enforcement, and urges Kip to his betrayal of Mr. Fessenden. Moreover, when he becomes a Prohibition agent she admonishes him to let no guilty bootician escape, and lectures in suburban Little Bethels to sustain him. Yet this same Maggie May, after she has had two babies, resorts to contraceptives, and, as Mr. Sinclair says, "is heartily glad to have them." Is she aware that this is contrary to "the laws of New York State?" She is. And is she willing to violate them? Yes again.

I confess that such inconsistencies leave me in something of a stew. Unfortunately, they are only too common in the realm of Law Enforcement. The same Friends of the Constitution who argue that any loosening of the Eighteenth Amendment would be an intolerable immorality are quite willing to see huge holes driven through the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth, and to abandon the Fourteenth and Fifteenth altogether. And the same Bishop Cannon who is against betting on horse-races almost as implacably as he is against booze-fighting is also the author of the most eloquent defense of gambling in the stock market ever penned. (Here I allude, of course, to his great bull, *Immaculatum ab hoc sæculo*). I can only regret that Mr. Sinclair has not gone into this matter with greater particularity. His gifts as a moralist are well known, and if he could be induced to discuss it at length there would be light and leading in his conclusions for all of us. As it is, he states a capital problem in ethical science without answering it.

His cunning as a literary artist does not diminish. His dialogue is highly polished. "Please, please, Papa!" cries Maggie May to her wine-cursed father, Mr. Roger Chilcote. "Do not drink any more!" "Oh, little girl, little girl," he replies, "what can Papa do? I cannot give it up! It is a fiend that has got me!" There are also some pretty passages between Maggie May's brother, Roger II, and his various loves. One of them is Miss Lilian Ashton, an actress. "No, Roger!" she exclaims, "I am not worthy of you! I have soiled myself!" To which he replies genially: "I am no spring-chicken myself, kid! Forget it!" "Such," observes Mr. Sinclair, "was romance made real." Later on Roger tackles a rich widow, Mrs. Anita Tydinge, while her deceased husband's carcass still lies in the house. "There are some," she protests, "who call you decadent. Have the dead no rights?" "Only," he answers, "the rights they have earned. Cold-bloodedly he bought you with his gold: you who were young and innocent of what the purchase meant." He is quoting Omar Khayyam to her when Maggie May comes in. "Let him say whatever he wishes," says Maggie May. "But if you see him lifting the wine-cup to his lips, knock it from his hand!"

Such stuff moves me, and I like a lot of it. "The Wet Parade" runs to 431 pages of small print, and is good value for the money. My hope is that Mr. Sinclair finds the time to write at least one more novel before the Revolution is upon us, and he is made Chief Justice of the United States. A hero stands ready for him: Dr. Albert Abrams, the San Francisco martyr. If I can help him with any inside dope against the Medical Trust I am his humble and obedient servant.

H. L. MENCKEN

Our Planless Economy

America's Primer. By Morris L. Ernst. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.

ANYONE who wants a brief and graphic picture of our planless national economy will be grateful that Morris Ernst has brought his energy, information, experience, and imagination to the task of writing an American primer. The result is a vivid little book, obviously suggested by "New Russia's Primer," but written with the necessary difference between describing plan and planlessness.

We are, Mr. Ernst reminds us, the richest people on earth, yet needlessly poor. We heap up things haphazard in the national basket and grab them out on no particular rule save opportunity to grab. We work for many reasons—and perhaps Mr. Ernst's best job is in analyzing in simple language why we work—but Things are pretty well on top. We declare that competition and the law of supply and demand give some sort

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of pattern to this chaos and then we promptly set to work to put competition out of order even at the price of getting racketeers to help build monopoly.

This bare outline is, of course, inadequate to describe the book, the merit of which is in the facts which the author cites. He by no means shrinks from praise or blame, but his effects are gained by describing. In his final section, where he tells how we deal with ideas, his enthusiasm for civil liberties justifiably shines through. With most of his assertions here and elsewhere I agree. Occasionally some *obiter dicta* creep in which I doubt. Would, for instance, the editor of *The Nation* "be disappointed if it had a circulation of a million" because it seeks not profit but influence on a "select vanguard of American thought"? I suspect *The Nation* would pay any price except disloyalty to itself to get a million readers!

But I wander from a reviewer's proper function, which is with a book as a whole. This book I praise. But while I praise it I find myself wishing that Mr. Ernst had written or would write a different book. Or perhaps I wish he had written this in 1928 or 1929, when doubtless a people sure that it had found the secret of getting rich by gambling would not have read it! What I mean is that by now the tale which Mr. Ernst has told is generally accepted among the very people who are most likely to read it. When I learned my letters, the Primer came first and then a series of Readers. Maybe Mr. Ernst intends to keep on, and from describing planlessness will proceed to follow out some of his own hints and suggest a plan. I hope so, for, perhaps mistakenly, I am skeptical of any high utility of even the most simple and vivid description of *Now* which does not go a little deeper into the causes of chaos and a little farther in suggesting possible escapes from it. We have moved fast in our thinking since October of 1929, and few there are to quarrel with our mood of realism or pessimism. But still fewer are those with a philosophy and program of change. Mr. Ernst's dedication to "Margaret who has a plan" suggests a hope. Let's hear from her!

NORMAN THOMAS

The Insanity of War

Society at War. By Caroline E. Playne. Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.50.

THIS is a profoundly destructive book. It is written around the thesis that war is a form of social insanity, and its documentation is from the press, books, speeches, interviews, and private diaries. The cumulative effect is very terrible, for it proves its thesis up to the hilt. In consequence, it takes a high place in the list of works to be read by those anxious to exorcise their minds of any belief whatsoever in the social or historical value of the World War. For curious as it may seem, there are still plenty of otherwise estimable souls who contend that yes, the war was awful and probably was not fomented by Germany, yet it was *necessary* and did a job that had to be done sometime or other. This crude rationalization is the last refuge of scoundrels. The war was not necessary. It is in all its aspects a blot on human history and a crime against society.

Nevertheless, once one has passed this moral judgment on a historical fact, there is no use sitting down and howling. The best way to bring the world in general around to this point of view is to analyze the situation with as much objectivity as one can command. "Society at War" is a brilliant piece of analysis looking in precisely the direction indicated. It takes a place in the front rank of revisionist works which are slowly extending backward into the historical and social genesis of the war and forward into its consequences.

The effect of war upon the human mind is early evidenced, and increasingly emphasized as the war proceeds, by "the contradiction between declared ideals and the means employed to realize them." In England, as the World War proceeded, the idealistic professions of the leaders became more and more gaudy, while a "reversal of the ideals of life became more and more apparent" in society at large. Civil rights were undermined, labor legislation was disintegrated, morals collapsed (and morals in the broader connotation, not merely the sexual), religion was suborned to the service of a cause diametrically opposed to its professions and purposes, the government became utterly irresponsible, finance became a madly logical campaign for wrecking the country since all sanitative foresight went by the board, and the intellectual life of the country became a vicious and heartrending parody on common sense.

A few of Miss Playne's generalizations may be illuminating:

> War, in the nature of things, demands the complete self-surrender of those who wage it. Herein lies the psychological danger. Absorption in one single direction, be it in religion or in art, or in personal ambition or otherwise is unhealthy. The minds, the souls of men, are crippled in war time by its implications of egotism, national pride and its groundwork of hatred and ill-will.
>
> Self-righteous pride, want of imagination and mad exultation prevented clerics [in the Benda sense] from realizing the horrors of the trenches and the shambles of concentrated high-explosive barrages. As the war dragged on, the failure of clerics consisted largely in their inability to recognize the criminality, the poisonous hatred, the lying falsity, to which unmitigated indulgence in belligerency reduced the Western world.
>
> Men being dominated by the elementary passions of suspicion, fear, hate, had reverted to primary mental states and become incapable of giving consideration to reasoned courses.

These are characterizations arrived at after careful exploration of confirming evidence and not mere generalizations thrown off at random to express an opinion.

Like most critical students of the war Miss Playne thinks that everything pointed to the necessity for peace in 1916 and that many facts in the general situation favored it. It was not made for the reason that the world was hysterical and incapable of recognizing facts. Her account of the hysteria in England is very illuminating. She notes three factors that made peace impossible then: the agreement made early in the war by the Allies that none of them would conclude peace until all agreed to do so; the egregious secret treaties; and the "Knock-Out" interview given by Lloyd George to Roy W. Howard. Lloyd George is, in fact, elevated to a high place among the war criminals as much by virtue of this interview as by any of his previous or subsequent acts.

Readers will recall that in late 1916 the world was full of peace rumors. The Germans offered to meet their enemies on neutral ground and discuss terms. In December President Wilson made his final offer of mediation. The stage was indeed set for a peace conference under the aegis of the most sensible ideal Wilson ever enunciated: "Peace without victory." But the insensate irresponsibility of the Allied leaders destroyed the chances for peace, and Lloyd George gave best expression to the current insanity. Study of the diplomatic dispatches from the Allies to the State Department about Wilson's offer clearly shows that the crippling obsession among Allied statesmen was a belief in Germany's diabolism. ("Belief in the diabolism was held with all the fierce determination of demented minds," writes Miss Playne.) Social insanity was at fever pitch, but Wilson held weapons for beating the Allies into an insensibility which would have been but a prelude to a sensible negotiated peace. That the German rulers were so ill-advised as to upset

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Wilson's equanimity by their submarine campaign is one of the major disasters of history, for it led directly to the exasperation of the world insanity by two more years of war, the adding of the United States to the completely insane nations, and it laid the groundwork for the tremendous outburst of madness at Versailles.

Miss Playne closes her book with the peace talk of December, 1916. She plans to write a volume on the period 1916-18. It should prove even more disillusioning than the present one.

C. HARTLEY GRATTAN

Labor in France

The Labor Movement in Post-War France. By David Saposs. Volume IV of *Social and Economic Studies of Post-War France.* Edited by Carlton J. H. Hayes. Columbia University Press. $6.

UP to the appearance of this volume English readers were dependent for their information on the French labor movement on Lewis Lorwin's "Syndicalism in France," J. A. Estey's "Revolutionary Syndicalism," and Marjorie Ruth Clark's monograph on post-war labor in France. The first two books are limited to the pre-war period, and deal essentially with the historical and theoretical aspects of the movement. None of the three attempts, to any great extent, to treat the labor movement from its functional aspect. It is this phase of French labor which Mr. Saposs now so admirably presents.

To the author, the story of the labor movement in post-war France does not present itself merely as a unilinear growth of an idea, driving leaders and masses to action. To him the labor movement is not only the story of the four or more labor organizations into which the movement was divided after the war, their different ideologies, and practices, but also of their relations with each other, their contact with the workers, their attitude toward political action and the state, and the policies of the employer and state regarding them.

The pre-war movement was characterized by its violent doctrines of direct action and anti-militarism. Except for the Catholic unions, the General Confederation of Labor (C. G. T.) was without a competitor in organizing the workers. The World War and the Russian Revolution put an end to that monopoly, and in place of one large organization there are four. The largest of the national labor groups, the C. G. T., is today reformist, and, contrary to pre-war practice, collaborates with the government on measures affecting labor. The group next in importance, dominated by the Communist Party, has caught the traditional revolutionary spirit of French labor, and is turning it toward Communist ends. In addition there are two smaller groups—the Catholic Confederation, tracing its origin to pre-war days, and the Anarchist group which broke away from the Communists in 1926, and looks to the universal revolution and to the destruction of the state by the expropriatory general strike.

With full detail, Mr. Saposs shows that since the war organized labor in France has been tending toward industrial unionism and centralization. The former Bourse is no longer a part of the official machinery of trade unions but has become a government agency. The government's policy of paternalism has been given great impetus by the war, and labor has profited immeasurably from such paternalism. Social insurance, the eight hour law, collective bargaining, the five and one-half day week, and the family wage, are only some of the benefits bestowed on labor. Employers, in their desire to wean the workers away from radicalism, have extended their welfare work, and founded "employers' unions" which sneer at the class struggle, support the Right parties, and combat radicalism.

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But organized labor has countered the attempts of the employers through its own propaganda agencies and with the aid of the government's social insurance laws which make the workers less dependent on their employers.

The cooperative movement, too, has held a significant place in the French labor movement. Though essentially a workers' movement, it is independent of the trade unions and the Socialist Party. The desire of the cooperatives for autonomy has not met with favor from Communists who, to gain another weapon in their struggle with bourgeois society, have been "boring from within." Their efforts have not met with any marked success.

This volume is one of a series on post-war France under the able editorship of Professor Hayes. As one reads it, the skilled craftsmanship of the author is immediately sensed. To his study of French labor he has brought his rich experience and wide knowledge of American labor problems. The result is a well integrated, and thought-provoking book that is worthy of the careful attention of all students of labor.

SAMUEL BERNSTEIN

Berlin Underworld

Alexanderplatz Berlin: The Story of Franz Biberkopf. By Alfred Döblin. Translated into the American by Eugene Jolas. The Viking Press. Two volumes. $5.

THIS is a story of the underworld in Berlin. The author, who is one of the best known German writers of the post-war transitional period, takes as the chief actor a former transport and cement worker, Frank Biberkopf, who has just been released from prison, and finds himself again in Berlin facing the hard realities of the world as he attempts to begin life anew a decade after the war. The four years which he served in prison have left their marks upon him, and to get a new footing seems worse than the servitude which he had just left: he dreads it, it is a new form of punishment, but he gradually makes new contacts—of the wrong kind. He attaches himself to friends only to be betrayed; he participates against his will in a burglary, and a treacherous companion throws him out of a moving motor car and in front of a pursuing car, and thereby causes him to lose an arm. His infirmity serves as an excuse to refrain from honest labor, and he becomes a pimp; he earns enough money from it but only sinks deeper into despair—a state from which he is rescued by the love of a prostitute who is later murdered by his own companion, a clever crook who turns the suspicion of the crime against Franz. He is now summoned before the court for questioning, but he only raves and seems to have lost his mind. Suspecting that Franz "is shamming madness because he knows his bean is at stake," the court places him in a detention ward for observation and here,

> Boom, crash, zoom, crash, boom, a battering ram, zoom, a knock at the door. Rushing and whirling and crushing and skirling, the Powers of Storm get together and hold their conference, it is night and they set about awakening Franz, not that they want to break his limbs, but the walls are so thick, he cannot hear what they call; but if he were nearer them, outside, he would feel them and hear Mieze [his murdered sweetheart] crying. Then his heart would open up, his conscience would be awakened, and he would arise and everything would be all right.

But Franz is not feigning madness, for in the delirium of mental agony he is near death, and remains so until the evil that was his past life has burnt itself away. His salvation comes when he learns that he cannot go through life in his own way alone, that he must become a cog in one of the many wheels of the great and intricate machine, the new social order.

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But in taking Franz through the Inferno of a great city to be buffeted by the forces of a modern Babylon, Döblin is not interested in this man in particular. Franz is one of many, and the story, with its tense scenes and dramatic situations, is obviously intended to reveal a condition, a world. That is the only thing that matters. There is no selection and there are no evaluations; a synthesis of narrative, dialogue, monologue, reflections, vague memories and tangible realities is poured forth in a stream of consciousness—and subconsciousness—which, nevertheless grips the reader, and depresses this reviewer. But that is an individual opinion, and may not reflect a fault in the novel.

The translator has caught the spirit of the narrative and has done his work well. It is more than a translation; it is also an interpretation, and if it often departs from the literal, what else could be done in a work of this kind?

> Whatcha mean, *goin' home, got a screw loose, or somethin,'* maybe you don't know who you're talkin' to, you can talk that way to that poor nut o' yours, but not to me.

It's translated into the American, all right.

KARL F. GEISER

Secret Police Under the Czar

The Ochrana, the Russian Secret Police. By A. T. Vassilyev. Edited and with an Introduction by René Fülöp-Miller. J. B. Lippincott Company. $4.

VASSILYEV was the last chief of the Russian secret police under the Czar, and his book, written in exile at Paris, is an absorbing account of the history of that organization. In the greatest detail and with every appearance of frankness he tells us how the secret police came into existence, how its personnel, not much more than a thousand at any time, was recruited, trained, and kept in hand, how it went about the business of spying and espionage, and of its activities in circumventing or trying to circumvent the plots of revolutionaries and terrorists. Naturally, the book is biased, and what appears to be veritable history has often to be carefully separated from what is obviously prejudice or downright hostility; for Vassilyev is a staunch supporter of the Czarist regime, an unmitigated hater of revolution and bolshevism, and, in general, a thick and thin defender of the office over which he presided. There should be no surprise to find him, for example, repelling the charge that the police employed *agents provocateurs* notwithstanding that they systematically kept in touch with everybody, from prostitutes upward, who could tip them off, or passing lightly over administrative punishment while carefully explaining that trial and conviction belonged to the courts.

Some of Vassilyev's estimates of persons or events, backed by a mixture of facts, inferences, and prejudices which cannot easily be unscrambled, are at least interesting. His contempt for the "cowardly" Kerensky is profound, and what he has to say about the Kerensky regime leaves that phase of Russian history in a draggled state. Rasputin, on the other hand, to whom he devotes several chapters, impressed him as a bombastic pretender whose influence, whether over the Russian people or at court, has been egregiously overrated. The narrative of the activities of the police in connection with Rasputin's murder is an important contribution.

Vassilyev's official career ended with the overthrow of the Czarist government, in 1917, but his description of the revolution, of his arrest (although an experienced police director, he walked straight into the arms of his captors), and of his six months' imprisonment in the Peter and Paul fortress is a vivid piece of writing. He had been removed to an ordinary prison

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and thence to a hospital just before the October revolution, presently obtaining his release through the efforts of his wife and the payment of a large sum of money. Before long he left Russia, and thereafter was a wanderer, ending his days in dire poverty at Paris in December, 1928. Mr. Fülöp-Miller's introduction is a summary review of the police systems which governments feel it necessary to maintain, and a frank criticism of some of the shortcomings of Vassilyev's narrative.

WILLIAM MACDONALD

Books in Brief

Death and Taxes. By Dorothy Parker. The Viking Press. $1.75.

In this, her latest book of verse, Dorothy Parker has again proved herself master of ironical humor. Her amazing facility in the handling of verse forms, her ability to echo with a wicked glitter the technique of Edna Millay, Sara Teasdale—not to mention some of the older poets—and at the same time to pass judgment upon their themes, is all in accord with the inevitable purpose of satire. This is light verse put to the severe test of serving as a weapon against sentimentality. It is the instrument of the analytical modern mind turned a little amusedly and a little bitterly against itself. And this fact explains, in part at least, Mrs. Parker's popularity. Such clever craftsmanship is reason enough for admiration, but there is more to be said: Mrs. Parker as a light verse writer is actually a better poet than many of our very serious composers in meter. There is many a perfect line here deliberately turned toward a flippant close. Only now and then does Mrs. Parker allow herself the liberty of being quite serious, but when she does, she writes very well indeed.

Up from the Ape. By Earnest A. Hooton. The Macmillan Company. $5.

This book is full of information. The author utilizes the data of comparative anatomy, comparative psychology, and even comparative physiology to picture man's evolutionary history and to set the background for his consideration of contemporary human races. The section on races is particularly fine. The author displays a sanity which is very rare in more popular works on this embattled topic. The book is well written with a pleasing facility of expression. Certain parts however require careful reading and study, but we can hardly blame Professor Hooton for the complexities of human anatomy. The author avoids polemics, but by the quiet presentation of facts he makes his opinions the more convincing. It would be unfair to emphasize the few remarks on the "purpose" of evolution. The author himself is timorous in his teleological beliefs. The rest of the book is so excellent as to warrant our forgiving the rare moments of weakness.

Dodd the Potter. By Cedric Beardmore. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.

Arnold Bennett's nephew has written a story of the contemporary younger generation laid in the same section of England which the uncle celebrated in his Five Towns novels. Dodd is a well meaning young man, but naive and somewhat stupid. His friends and family are all thoroughly uninteresting, not only as people but as characters in a realistic novel of commonplace life. The story of the everyday life and loves of the young people is set off against the secondary tale of past events in which their elders were involved; and there is some attempt to show the conflicts and differences between the generations. Like its hero the story is honest but at the same time somewhat dull.

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Drama

Good Intentions

THE audience which gathered at the Broadhurst Theater to welcome Owen Davis's "Just to Remind You" was almost pathetically well disposed. Civic consciousness (as the newspapers tell us) has been aroused at last, and surely there could be no easier way of demonstrating the fact than by applauding a play which is all about gangsters and their nefarious ways. No one could miss the blunt point of Mr. Davis's latest work, and no one cares to deny that things have come to a pretty pass when a nice young man gets shot just because he refuses to pay one hundred dollars a month for "protection." Hence everybody applauds when applause is called for and laughs when laughter is indicated.

Unfortunately, however, timeliness and good intentions are the only virtues with which it is possible to credit the play. When the fine upstanding young laundryman tells the gangsters that he intends to run his own business in his own way, everybody knows what is going to happen—and it does. A bomb explodes in the window, somebody pours acid into the wash, and just while the crooked judge is making a patriotic speech, the laundryman gets it in the back. Nor are the characters any more individualized or real than the plot is original. *A* nice young man, *a* sweet young girl, and *a* comic Chinaman constitute the chief members of the dramatis personae. All of them come straight out of any one of a thousand eminently forgettable plays, and they spout lines most of which Mr. Davis himself has probably used a dozen times before. Given his talents as a practical dramatist there is no reason why he should not have written "Just to Remind You" in ten of his off days, and I am more than inclined to suspect that he did. As for the actors, they do as well as could be expected with the material, but that is not very well.

Under the circumstances I should naturally like to hope that the play would "do good." Even before seeing it I thought gangsters very unpleasant people, and it would be nice to suppose that all the members of its audience would be turned into crusaders. Candor compels me to admit, however, that I have my doubts. Ever since—in my youth—I read William James's account of the nice Russian aristocrats who wept over the hardships of the poor while their coachman froze on his seat outside the theater, I have been inclined to suspect that the admiration which is awakened by the expression of noble sentiments in art tends rather to lull than to stimulate the conscience. It is so easy and so pleasant to put oneself on the right side of an imaginary conflict, so easy to be heroic and generous and noble when it costs nothing except a little applause. Personally, I felt that when I had approved of Mr. Davis's most ringing utterances I had done my bit toward cleaning up the city, and probably most of my fellow spectators felt much the same. All of us were on the right side; nobody failed to sympathize with the troubles of the young laundryman; and that is about all that can be expected of a good citizen. When the time comes we shall vote the straight ticket with an even clearer conscience than we could possibly have had if "Just to Remind You" had not given us such an excellent opportunity to show where we stand. "Pretty strong show and just about right too. How about stopping by Luigi's for a drink before we turn in"?

"Ladies of Creation" (Cort Theater) is a not unamusing comedy which would be an excellent one if it were always as funny as some of its lines. Unfortunately, however, this satire on the business woman, by Gladys Unger, has a good many

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languid stretches despite the acting of an admirable cast. It is funniest when it consents to be frankly farcical and dullest when it goes in gravely for the psychology of the woman on her own. Chrystal Herne, Dorothy MacKaye and Spring Byington deserve all praise. Miss MacKaye especially has excruciating moments as the movie star who doesn't quite know what it is all about. JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Finance

Back to 1926

IF the index of stock prices compiled by the New York *Times* be accepted as an epitome of stock values, all the gains of the great bull market since 1926 have now disappeared. The composite price of the fifty stocks included in the index has dipped below the point at which it stood five and a half years ago. Of more immediate significance, from the Wall Street point of view, is the fact that the heavy selling which occurred last week carried the average below the previous low point of this year, touched on June 2, and thus established a new "bottom."

Last week, in fact, was one of those periods which have occurred with unpleasant frequency during the last two years, when news affecting security values has been of an intense and almost unrelieved "blue." The Berlin Börse, closed for nearly two months, startled Wall Street by showing declines of 25 to 40 per cent in prices on the day business was resumed. The United States Treasury's offering of $800,000,000 twenty-four-year 3 per cent bonds, instead of being subscribed eight times over, as was the issue of identical amount four months ago, brought forth applications less than 20 per cent in excess of the amount of bonds offered. It is true that the coupon rate of the present issue is ⅛ per cent less than that of the June offering, and the bonds dropped to a discount of ⅜ per cent on the first day's transactions on the Exchange. But one suspects that the relatively poor response of investors on this occasion means, among other things, that the purse-holding public is serving notice that it would like to see some indications of a balanced national budget before it pours out unlimited millions for government use. The hint was conveyed to London recently in no uncertain terms; why not to Washington?

Happenings among the railroad companies have come still closer home to the stock market, and the decline in the rail shares is responsible for the dip in the price average below this year's earlier minimum; industrial stocks have remained, thus far, above that point. Within the week the New York Central and New Haven roads reduced their quarterly dividend payments from $1.50 to $1 per share and the Rock Island and Maine Central omitted their common stock dividends. A few days previously the Lehigh Valley had also failed to make a payment. Rock Island shares, on the news of the dividend omission, promptly lost one-third of their market value.

In spite of these events and the despondency which they have created, it is possible to draw some hopeful inferences (in a very tentative fashion, it is true) from the showing of the stock price index, noted above. At no time since the beginning of the century, if we omit such extraordinary events as the outbreak of the world war in 1914 and our own participation in it in 1917, have average prices been as low at the end of any five-year period as they were at the beginning. Most of the indexes agree on this. Yet prices today stand where they stood more than five years ago. If 1926 be regarded as a fairly normal year, untainted by the speculative mania which later swept the markets, prices are now back to the average of "normalcy." S. PALMER HARMAN

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HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON, author, satirist and cartoonist, is writing regularly for *The Nation.*

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JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH, after an absence of fifteen months in Europe, is resuming in this issue his regular dramatic articles for *The Nation.*

S. PALMER HARMAN was formerly on the financial staff of the New York *Evening Post.*

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